The Chase

Australia's **NUMBER 1** sex, dating and relationships columnist

Everything you need to know about men, dating and sex

SAMANTHA BRETT

Samantha Brett is a columnist, dating expert, TV personality and writer of Australia's number 1 sex, dating and relationships column 'Ask Sam' for the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Samantha regularly appears on the E! News Channel, Channel 10's *9AM*, *The Today Show*, *The Morning Show*, *A Current Affair*, *Today Tonight* and radio stations across Australia. Samantha is also the producer and host of the TV series *The S-Word: Sex Secrets USA*, which features interviews with celebrities, experts, authors, psychologists and pick-up artists. Samantha currently splits her time between Los Angeles and Sydney and has interviewed the likes of David Beckham, Heidi Klum, Kim Kardashian and Mr and Mrs Kutcher to name a few. In her spare time, she likes to box, write and drink cocktails with her four best friends.

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To my real-life Mr Darcy.
Thank you for teaching me that there
really are good men in the world … and
for giving hope to women everywhere.

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After writing over 1000 columns, receiving half a million responses, and interviewing too many men to count, for the first time ever I am revealing the naked truth about what men think about women.

Many of the men I've interviewed have said they've never been completely honest . . . UP UNTIL NOW.

So why have these men decided to reveal their secrets? Because they want modern women to know what goes on inside their heads: they want us to understand their games, their lies, their wants and needs. The reasons they do what they do.

So herein it lies, in all its naked glory: 101 things men want YOU to know.

But be warned: it's not pretty . . .

Much of it is shocking, jaw-dropping and difficult to digest.

All of it is done in the name of tough love.

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Part 1

The Singles Epidemic

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A Cautionary Tale: Jane

A small-town reporter named Jane went to Los Angeles on a mission: to find a story, a man and a new life. Yet, unlike many other femmes making the pilgrimage to the land of milk, honey, plastic breasts and bling that dazzles even through the darkest Tom Ford sunglasses, this reporter smelled of Diptyque perfume rather than the putrid stench of desperation. Even though she suddenly found herself single for the first time in ages, she was eager, but not desperate, to get back in the game. Since she hadn't had much experience negotiating the treacherous Hollywood dating jungle, she was shocked at what she discovered: randy men who rotated their women like they rotated their underwear.

After weeks of meeting boring men whose opening lines consisted of phrases like, 'I'm an actor', 'You may recognise me from the reality show . . .' or 'I'll help you with your career if you blow me', she came across a refreshingly charismatic producer during an interview with him about his latest film. Though she didn't feel any sexual connection at first—he was fifteen years her senior and two inches shorter (though she was wearing heels at the time)—she gave him her number anyway. After all, he had offered to take her for the best sushi of her life, and a girl alone in a big city doesn't say no to a good piece of fish.

After dinner, they headed to one of Hollywood's most illustrious watering holes where the security was tighter than at an Al-Qaeda secret meeting and the drinks were flowing freer than Lindsay Lohan's breasts. When a bunch of blokes

recognised her date and bought them drinks, Jane felt like a rock star.

The following morning, she woke up to find herself naked and tangled in the Producer's ivory silk sheets.

'Do you think we'd travel well together?' he purred from behind her, his hands clasping her waist. 'I want to take you to New Zealand.' He raised his hand to touch her breasts.

#1. FIRST NIGHT WARNING:

Women fall in love with their EARS. Therefore men know all the right things to say and the right buttons to push with their words. However please note: you can only really tell if a man is interested in you by his actions, NOT his vowels. Ignore everything he says . . . especially on the first date or after a night of the horizontal hanky panky. Wait until a few days later and see if he contacts you or does anything to see you again . . .

'Whoa, no sex stuff this morning,' Jane said, rolling over. 'I want to get to know you first.'

He laughed, retracted his hand and asked her what she wanted to know.

It hadn't mattered that she'd uttered the exact same thing the previous night. She'd told him at the club that she wasn't going to sleep with him so he'd better quit trying. But the Producer was well-versed in this sort of reaction and instantly

recognised it as what he called the 'anti-slut defence'. So he told her he just needed to pick up something from his house before they headed to the next club.

Jane hadn't realised it was already 3 am and so, in her drunken haze, she had acquiesced.

Once she agreed to the stopover, all bets were off. He grabbed her free hand—the one not clasping her fourth glass of champagne—squeezed it twice and whispered something delectable into her ear. She threw her head back in delight and squeezed his hand back: the universal signal that she wanted more. Or at least that's what he told himself. He led her out the back of the club and into his red sports car, then whizzed away before she could yell, 'I'm not that into you!'

He then drove her all the way back to his pad—in The Valley.

'Oh, I never do this sort of thing,' Jane stammered when they arrived at his place.

Of course you don't, *he thought as he poured himself a Jack and Coke. Every woman on the planet seemed to use the 'I'm not a slut but you're special so I'll sleep with ONLY YOU on the first night' excuse after going back to a man's place. Not only had he heard it a million times before, but he knew he would always do what he always did best: get them to let their guard down then carry out the infamous 'fuck and flee' manoeuvre.*

Unfortunately Jane hadn't known any of this the following day when the Producer had politely taken her for a late breakfast of tea and cupcakes. She didn't know this when he told her she looked cute in his borrowed T-shirt emblazoned

#2. FIRST NIGHT EXCUSE:

Every woman uses the perpetual I'm-not-a-slut-I-never-do-this-on-the-first-date excuse when she goes home with a man on the first night. Even if you've never done that, every girl says it and he's heard it a thousand times before . . . If you do decide to go home with him, don't apologise. Own your actions. He'll respect you more if you do . . .

with the words 'I Hate Celebrities', that she'd teamed with her six-inch metallic Manolo heels from the previous night and the metallic silver BCBG dress that crept right up to the crease of her butt. She didn't know it either when he told her he'd never met anyone like her before, dropped her off at her apartment and promised to keep in touch.

Later that day he sent her a text telling her he couldn't help but think she'd left too soon. He called her right before she boarded her flight. She was in lust.

On the flight back home, she began making secret plans to move cities, find a new job, lose some weight (no-one in Hollywood dated anyone over size two), and move into his luxurious chateau where he'd feed her strawberries dipped in chocolate as she sprawled on his bed and they wrote poetry together, right before he proposed . . . He was everything she had been searching for her whole life; the reason she hadn't committed to any of the nice guys she'd previously dated. She craved excitement, happiness, travel, feeling alive. She

had to have him. And she was going to do everything in her power to get him.

#3. ONE NIGHT RULE:

One night is all it takes for women to fall hopelessly in love with a man you've only just met. One night ladies. That's because of the raging mothering hormones in our bodies that make us instinctively cling to the man we've just bonked. If you know ahead of time you're not able to own your actions (and let's face it—most of us can't) don't do it to yourself. It's not worth the heartache that is bound to follow . . .

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1

Who is the modern man?

Men weren't really the enemy—they were fellow victims suffering from an outmoded masculine mystique that made them feel unnecessarily inadequate when there were no bears to kill.

Betty Friedan

The only really happy folk are married women and single men.

Henry Louis Mencken

SADFAB no more

Welcome to the age of the pash and dash; the fuck and flee—where men get to act like kids in a candy store and pick and mix as they please.

Well, ladies, it's time for us to take a stand. It's time for women to seize back the dating power. We're no longer going to be lied to, cheated on, played, trapped, used, dumped, tossed away like last night's condom. It's time modern women stood up on their high heels and shouted that we're no longer going to be the victims of the dating game gone wrong. No longer will we let men break our hearts into a million different pieces as they flick through their multitude of options. And no longer are we going to make ourselves sick on a diet of Candy Men, quick fixes and addictive behaviours. No more.

It angers me to see so many intelligent women morphing into SADFABs (Single And Desperate For A Boyfriend . . . or baby) just because some loser they dated or slept with never called again, never apologised and never plucked up the courage to offer an explanation or any sense of closure.

I am here to tell you that you are better than that. So no more hanging around a man you know is a lecherous cad just so you don't end up alone, and 'on the shelf', or don't have to arrive at your best friend's wedding with a rent-a-date just to avoid the dreaded, 'So when will we be seeing a ring on your finger?'

#4. MAN RULE:

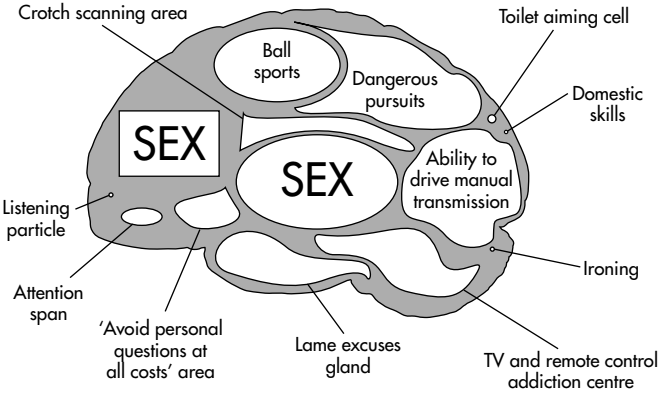
Don't be a SADFAB! When you're a SADFAB, men can see it in your eyes and smell it in your sweat. Don't lay out your cards on the table or expect him to slot into your life plan. Be a Wonder Woman . . . and make him wonder!

It's time to stand up to anyone who pressures you to hurry up and marry the next eligible Lothario who works his devilish charm on you, or to settle for the next decent man who comes along even if he doesn't share your tastes in anything. Who cares if our mothers were married and had two kids by the time they were twenty-five? Who cares that by some men's standards women are over the hill the instant they hit twenty-five? We're a different generation. We're 'freemales'—modern women who do what they want. And we're not about to let a bunch of old-fashioned nobs tell us how to run our lives.

You are in control of your destiny. Seize it. Just don't seize a man and dig your fingernails into him so deeply that he has no choice but to run. Ladies, the first step in any plan is understanding what you're up against, so I'm going to share with you what I've learned—welcome to the science of the male brain . . .

The male brain

The sad truth is, modern men are no different to the men that existed since before iPods, Pilates gyms and *Gossip Girl*. Just because there's been a sexual revolution (which men are still gloating about behind our backs, by the way) this doesn't mean someone's waved a magic wand over male behaviour and men no longer mind if we ask them out, or sleep with them on the first date, or call them incessantly, or tell them how we feel, or even brag that we can indeed have sex like men. Because, newsflash—nothing has changed since the caveman era. That's right, ladies. Despite their new loafers, trendy hairdos and Country Road collared shirts, modern men are still biologically built to act like cavemen. And that means it's their instinct to hunt their prey . . .YOU.



NOTE: the 'Listening to children cry in the middle of the night' gland is not shown due to its small and underdeveloped nature. Best viewed under a microscope.

Male brain: sex, food, beer, sex, car, sex, sport, porn, sex, cricket, sex, pizza, more beer, sex.

Female brain: marriage, babies, commitment, cuddling, support, love, roses, romance, *The Notebook*, *Love Actually*, *Dirty Dancing* and *My Best Friend's Wedding*.

Why men are like cavemen

Men are not really that difficult to understand. That is if you can whip your head around the fact that all men are simply cavemen at heart and are therefore biologically wired to act, think and respond the same way they did thousands of years ago.

When a man like the Producer comes along, he sees a woman like Jane as a challenge: game meat that he has to hunt. Adrenaline rushes through his body, his pulse races and his dick goes hard. He needs to know if he still has it. He needs to feed his ego. He wants to be the guy who's going to sweep her off her feet. And he knows how to do it. All guys on the hunt do: they know exactly what a woman will fall for, which lines will work, which drinks make her tipsy just enough to go home with him, but not drunk enough so that she passes out before he gets a blow job.

The Neanderthal Male liked nothing more than to stalk his chosen mate, club her over the head, drag her back to his cave, have his way with her and then send her on her merry way. Sounds delightful, doesn't

it? And things haven't really changed all that much these days—except for the clubbing scenario, which the modern man may like to attempt but for the fact that he could be thrown in jail, or at least out of the nightclub.

However, while many gents might love to use the caveman theory as an excuse for some of their more outlandish ways—like being unable to direct their pee into the toilet bowl, scratching their private bits in public, and getting a thrill out of logical explanations and problem-solving—I find it difficult to get my head around it. Women have evolved so thoroughly throughout time, morphing from gatherers to housewives to career women while still bearing and raising children all the way along. Physically, we've started injecting, prodding, waxing, tightening and bleaching everything from our teeth to our buttholes. We've realised the power of our breasts, then burnt our bras, only to buy push-up ones, and then purchased chicken fillets to enhance our breasts even further. And we're supposed to believe that men haven't evolved right alongside us since the caveman era? Puh-lease. You can see why this little factoid befuddles me. Hence I decided to approach American writer Jonathan Innerarity, who on his *xenlogic* blog gives one of the best explanations of the caveman theory I've heard. When I asked him if I could share his theory with my readers he was flattered.

Why men are like cavemen by Jonathan Innerarity

'Men were designed to copiate women—hunt them even—all eligible women—like a pack of wolves after prey. So long as a being has two breasts and a vagina, and other variables are moderately suitable, friendship is not a top priority for any two-legged mammal with a penis. Two men can be the best of friends. However, when it's a man and a woman, the relationship becomes one of pursuit à la subterfuge.

'The caveman instinct is what kept the human race alive. If men didn't want to stick their penis into every vagina within a visible 100-yard radius, the human race would've been wiped out millennia ago by a series of natural upheavals . . . Millennia later, the world has become so populated that we no longer need this caveman instinct—but it is still there, deep in men's unconscious, propelling us to sexually desire every even mildly attractive pair of legs wrapped in a skirt.

'That's why even to this day, men still want more vagina—even when we're happily married with children. It's pretty annoying really. Many of us men wish we could just turn it off—but that's not possible. In fact, I will boldly assert that because of this hard-coded biological imperative, it's highly unnatural for any one man to desire only one woman. That's a mental state that came with the pussification of society so as to sustain life on this tiny planet with limited resources.

'Men are naturally polygamous. The caveman instinct is what makes us that way. Monogamy is a skill we taught

ourselves so that we can maintain sustainable reproductive development in modern societies. That's why we invented all that religious mumbo jumbo to control our urges before we were smart enough to invent condoms.'

All this makes our efforts to painstakingly analyse, probe and decode a man's words, text messages or emails a little embarrassing, if all they're doing is simply reacting to their biologically wired caveman instincts.

And, ever since the sexual revolution, when women valiantly reclaimed their own sexuality, things have been going even further downhill. 'Women want sex just as much as men?' the gents asked with glee. 'Fan-fucking-tastic!' they cheered. To them, this meant saying goodbye to the superfluous business of courting, dating, coercing, romanticising—all that lovey-dovey codswallop. Finally, no more acting like Mr Nice Guy to get a woman into the sack.

Suddenly—thanks to *us* allowing this—they believed that all women wanted was some company over dinner (some women even chose to pay their share), light banter on the car ride home and a warm body in the sack. The man was even free to leave as soon as the deed was done, just so long as he promised to call her in the morning. *Or not.* Because modern women weren't afraid to call or chase *him*. Women became as aggressive in the bedroom as they were in

the boardroom, chasing men like they were the last pair of Jimmy Choos in their size at a samples sale. The big difference being that the men didn't even have to fit properly. *But hey*, the women told themselves, *one size should fit all. As long as he was a living, breathing male with a job and no criminal record. (And sometimes even that didn't matter.)*

In an attempt to beat men at their own game, many women mistakenly flipped the natural order on its head. Women effectively became hunters themselves, overturning biological patterns that have been in place for thousands of years.

Why men love the thrill of The Chase

Ah, the thrill of the man-chase.

His heart is racing, his cheeks are flushed and his adrenaline's pumping. He's anxiously waiting for that small sign of interest from the hot femme he's been so relentlessly pursuing, hoping that he'll soon get lucky without having to put in too much effort.

But alas, the girl he's trying to score isn't so easy. She doesn't return his text messages, cancels their date at the last minute and seems uninterested in meeting his friends . . . ever. *What the hell is going on?* he wonders. *Isn't she into me?*

#5. THE POWER OF THE CHASE:

Never underestimate the power of The Chase, no matter what stage of the relationship you're in—whether it be three dates, three months or three years. Avoid being needy, whiny, desperate or clingy. You're a prize to be caught and he should feel lucky to have you!

Instead of backing off and letting some other gent win the race, his competitive nature kicks in and he tries even harder. The urge to win is in his blood. And he's not going to let this woman get away.

Hence, by dating multiple people (without rubbing it in your caveman's face) or by subtly being 'busy' when he calls for a booty call, makes his competitive nature start to take shape. By not showing any interest, she's become the ultimate challenge. He begins to chase her. And he'll continue to chase her until he pins her down.

#6. MEN FEED OFF COMPETITION:

Appear too easy or offer yourself up on a silver platter and he'll lose interest before you can yell 'dessert'!

Men are creatures of habit. They date, mate and fornicate on instinct. For them, it's all about caveman inclinations; actions that have been programmed into

them for so many centuries, they don't know any other way. They need to hunt. They need to protect their freedom. They need to brag about their conquests so the rest of the tribe will see who is superior.

Not only did cavemen need to hunt, but there was FIERCE competition among the entire tribe to see who could bring back the biggest, juiciest prey. The bigger and stronger the man, the more competitive he would be. And when a caveman saw the woman he wanted being pursued by other men of the tribe, he would do everything in his power to beat those men to the prize. Today, that's you.

Sex and the dopamine effect

Another reason why men love the thrill of The Chase is because during the hunt their brains release a whopping amount of a chemical called dopamine, otherwise known as the 'feel-good' chemical.

Says relationships guru Ian Kerner: 'From an evolutionary perspective, the pursuit of sex stimulates the reward centre in a man's brain. Pursuing a woman by buying her things or flirting increases levels of dopamine, a feel-good chemical that's released when we do something pleasurable, like eat or have sex. Many men thrive off this feeling, so it's easy to see why they do it so often.'

As someone famous once said: 'Isn't the chase more exciting than the catch?'

And as the men I've interviewed would say, 'Amen to that.'

#7. WARNING:

MEN LOVE THE THRILL OF THE CHASE thanks to the dopamine effect. Give in to a man's chase too easily and his dopamine wears off, leaving him high and dry and looking for his next prey. Which, girlfriend, I assure you ain't you!

The Chase never ends

'My boyfriend still pursues me, even seven years on,' said 27-year-old Petra. When I asked her what her secret was to pinning down her caveman for more than a pash and dash, she said it's the fact that she's never completely available.

'He has to check with me first to see if I'm free for a romantic dinner, chase to get me on the phone, a weekend getaway or even just to have breakfast with him on a Sunday morning because I usually reserve that time for my 7.30 am spin class,' she explained.

It's not that Petra's playing games with her man. It's just that she's aware of the fact that if she makes it too easy for him then he's going to run away faster than Lance Armstrong powering down a mountain on his MX5 bicycle. Even if you're in a long-term relationship, putting on the pressure, acting needy or morphing into a clingy, marriage-obsessed Bridget Jones will spell the kiss of death for the union.

The fact is: men need to chase. Whether we women like it or not, we just have to accept it. It all comes down to their biological make-up. And that's why it's to your detriment to call him when he hasn't called you, to email him too many times, to accept booty calls, berate him over his lack of commitment, or even have sex with him too soon. And don't think for a second that you can rationalise your behaviour by saying that if you don't call him he'll forget you exist and stick his bits into some other woman's slots. If he's going to do that he will do it regardless, no matter how many texts, calls or visits to his cave you make. All you'll get out of it is a loss of respect—of him for you and you for yourself.

#8. MAN FACT:

Don't think for a second that if you don't make contact, a man's going to forget about you. If a man is into you, he'll chase you down no matter what the odds! In fact, the more aloof you are, the more it will drive him crazy to pin you down.

From the Male Room

'Once a girl becomes too available your self-worth increases and you may begin to feel you can do much better. All the hang-ups you had as a desperate single man have suddenly disappeared.'—***Tosh***

'Men have been chasing after something, and more importantly been rewarded for it, since we crawled out of the primeval ooze. Speed and strength are an important difference between the sexes on a basic level and men assert their masculinity by exploiting those differences. Simply, we chase because we can and it makes us feel more like men. It's not very complicated really. We feel empowered if we've gone after something and gotten it. Claiming something rather than having it given to you is a sense of accomplishment and really that is what has driven mankind to progress as a species. Although not an object to be "hunted", women inevitably fall prey (bad choice of words!) to that same instinct. You always value something or someone you've had to win over rather than just had it or them fall in your lap. Anything too easy gets taken for granted. By the way, it doesn't hurt that women obviously like being pursued (provided they're attracted to the hunter). I think women tend to treat it as a compliment that they've been singled out as worthy of the time and effort that every good wooing takes if it's done properly.'—**BTDT**

'Men need entertainment, men need a challenge. . . but we also want someone who does not take us for granted, someone that is responsive to our wants. We can settle and we do but we get bored.'—**Darkman**

'Men chase women until the woman catches them. Bear in mind that, deep down, I believe women are cavewomen. It's just that men, like women, find truly exceptional women harder to come by, so in the absence of eligible partners and almost no negative consequences for sleeping around—we'll have fun and stay uncommitted. For women, those negative consequences exist—hence the need to pretend the sleeping around doesn't happen.'—**Gary**

'Do you want sex or a relationship? Sex is predatory, and once the kill has happened—well, yes, The Chase is over. A relationship on the other hand is evolving, challenging and hopefully very interesting.'—**Dave**

A Cautionary Tale: Lulu

If single women out on the prowl stink of desperation, then Lulu Johnson would be emanating an odour so foul it would stink worse than a strip club on a Sunday morning.

Lulu, a mousy-blonde, voluptuous (okay, she knew she had at least ten pounds to lose, but didn't everyone?) five-foot-two ball of energy was ready to attract a new man into her life. And marry him. And have his babies.

At thirty-three, the smart, university-educated girl (who looked just like a clone of Renee Zellweger from Bridget Jones's Diary*) moved to LA to make something of herself in the world of law. She'd been single for too long and her biological clock was ticking loudly enough to tell her she had to hang on tightly to the next man that looked her way . . .*

While Lulu wasn't the best-looking girl of the bunch (she always suffered from a little weight problem but compensated with her over-the-top personality), she'd never really had a problem with getting a man. She did, however, have difficulty keeping him.

#9. DESPERATION STINKS:

Men can see it, feel it, hear it and smell it a mile away. If you are after him for his potential husband/fathering skills, even though you hardly know him, he is going to run a mile . . .

And then Lulu met a man who was different to all the others. He wasn't a player, a pick-up artist, a loser, cad, cheat or wannabe Casanova. At least, that's what Lulu thought. After all the self-help books she'd read, courses she'd attended, and experiences with men who'd damaged her delicate heart by fucking and fleeing, she thought she finally had it all pieced together and was able to spot a decent guy when he turned up on her doorstep. Or at her local gym, to be exact.

As she lay tangled in the chocolate-brown silk sheets of Chad's bed, she knew this time it would be different. Or she hoped it would be. She looked at the man beside her and felt a sharp pang in her chest as she pictured doing this every day for the rest of her life. I wonder what he thinks about kids? *she thought.* I must remember to ask him when he wakes up. *They'd been together for a few weeks (okay, two), but already she knew that he had the potential to be 'the one'. After all, their connection was electric. He could even speak French! And it was Lulu's dream to one day live in Paris and learn the language.*

She'd spotted Chad's bulging biceps, boyish face and Conan O'Brien-esque long chestnut hair at the gym and had quickly surmised that he was just the type of guy she was looking for. So she'd waltzed up to him at the water cooler and given him her best flirtatious smile as he worked on his biceps. She'd read in one of her self-help books that you didn't actually have to go up and talk to a guy to get his attention, you just had to smile at him and that was enough of a come-on for him to let his guard down without fearing rejection. And that's exactly what happened. Well, not exactly.

He didn't really notice her smile so she'd tapped him on the shoulder over at the chest press.

They began seeing each other daily at the gym (she bumped up her twenty-minute stroll on the treadmill, which directly faced the men doing weights, to a thirty-minute light jog) and it wasn't long before they were having a coffee afterwards and talking about life, sex and protein shakes.

'He never really flirted with me,' Lulu told her reporter friend Jane over lattes and white chocolate hazelnut gelato at Primo Café on the Sunset Strip. 'In front of his mates he was all macho and muscly . . . Mr Gym. But I could tell that underneath he was a sensitive, vulnerable guy who had really deep insights about life.'

#10. THE CHASE:

If he's not chasing you, calling you, doting on you or following you around like a lovesick puppy from day one, move on. Date other men. Live your own life and wait for him to come crawling to you. It's the only way you'll ever know if he's truly that into you. Upsetting the natural balance of The Chase will never ever work . . . EVER.

Lulu explained to Jane that one Friday night she'd been sitting at home nursing her second glass of wine and cursing the fact that she was single when she received a message from Mr Gym.

'What u up 2?' he had asked.

'Nothing much. Pretty bored actually,' she'd replied. 'Want to come over and watch a movie?'

#11. MAN INVITATION ALERT:

Men use certain lies, tips and tactics to get women into bed. Of course if you like the guy, it's a bonus. But if you don't, don't kid yourself by attempting to believe his lies. Nine times out of ten he's only after ONE THING!

A frisson of energy ricocheted through her body and she could hardly contain her excitement. When she arrived at his pad donned in white jeans and a beige peasant top, she was astounded by how tiny his apartment was. The piles of stuff everywhere meant they had to double up on the couch. Not that she minded.

Halfway through the movie he kissed her. It was the most delectable kiss of her life and made the insides of her legs tingle.

The next Friday night, the pattern was repeated. Only this time they had sex. And suddenly, just like that, they were a Friday night 'thing'. Lulu had become 'After-Dinner-Sex-Girl'. Not that she cared. She knew it would lead to something . . . eventually.

'I'm in love,' Lulu gushed to Jane. 'Isn't that great? Finally!' Her green eyes were as wide as saucers as she waxed lyrical about Chad. 'He's really different. Seriously, he's different to every other guy I've been with . . . This is big,' she said.

Jane didn't dare remind Lulu that they'd had the exact same conversation about another guy—Matt someone—only a few weeks before. And that hadn't ended well.

#12. HOW TO ENSURE YOU'RE NOTHING MORE THAN A BOOTY CALL:

If you go over to a man's house after 10 pm at night, you're immediately going to be categorised into the 'Booty Call' category. Don't expect him to wine and dine you or take you out on a date, call you his girlfriend or introduce you to his mates. Make sure that's what you want before you get yourself into it!

'I can't even eat any more,' Lulu said, pushing her gelato aside. 'It's like I've completely lost my appetite. There are all these butterflies in my stomach. You know, he could definitely be "the one"! For real this time.'

As usual, Lulu had compartmentalised Chad into the box of 'future-husband-father-of-my-kids-needs-to-meet-my-mum-immediately-and-buy-me-a-ring'. It seemed no matter how smart Lulu was, she just couldn't do the man-math and realise that one dickhead after another dickhead did not cancel out the third dickhead, no matter how many times you multiplied the orgasms and rooted the square.

'God, I hope he calls me soon.' Lulu glanced surreptitiously at her iPhone. 'He said he would. I just love talking to him. We have so much in common, you know? It's like we can talk for hours and hours and we're totally on the same wavelength . . .'

Jane said nothing. Besides having heard this story a million times before, and knowing all too well that it never ended in Lulu's favour (she'd heard every male excuse in the book via Lulu, who believed them all), Jane was lost in her own thoughts about the Producer. It had been two whole weeks since she'd heard from him. Two weeks since he'd had roses delivered to her apartment. Her emails remained unanswered, her text messages lay floating in the ether and her Facebook inbox was empty. What the heck happened? *Jane wondered. Had he met someone else? Hadn't he got her messages? Should she try calling him again?*

#13. FIRST NIGHT WARNING:

Whilst he may promise you the world on the first date, know that when a man goes MIA after the first date or the first time you sleep with him, or any time after you've been in his presence in any state of undress, assume immediately that it's not you—it's some other floozy that has come along and had sex with him or given him a blow job a little better than you did. Imagine you're in a conga line and she's just the next dancer along. Once the two of them embrace, he's completely forgotten about you and is probably already onto his third girl by the time you realise he hasn't been in touch. And seriously—why the heck would you want to date a guy who sleeps with women like he's in a fucking conga line? No thank you . . .

'Hello! Are you even listening to me, Janey?' Lulu asked as she frustratedly stabbed at her gelato. 'I said I think he's "the one"!'

At that moment Lulu's phone beeped with a text: 'You on for tonight? 11 pm?'

Her heart skipped a beat. Chad was definitely going to make the perfect father . . .

2

The casual sex con: Why you need to keep your G-string on

Women need a reason to have sex.
Men just need a place.

Billy Crystal

Don't have sex, man. It leads to kissing and pretty soon you have to start talking to them.

Steve Martin

Why 'Starbucks sex' is no longer satiating the female appetite

Here's a true tale. A hairdresser named Jocelyn meets a man named Ken at a hip restaurant downtown. When Ken asks to buy her a drink, she doesn't decline. After all, he is cute, charming, funny and works right around the corner from her house.

That night he sends her a text saying he wished he could see her again. She responds that she'd love to get together. All good so far. The following day she sends him a message asking him where and when he'd like to meet. When he doesn't reply, she sends him another text.

'I just need some time to myself right now,' he responds.

Ouch. Jocelyn is taken aback. 'That's weird,' she says, eyeing her phone. 'He was the one who initiated things with me! And now he's ending them?'

Later that night, it seems he changes his mind. 'Be at my place in an hour. Come naked. Don't talk. I want this to be hot and anonymous. If you talk, you break the rules and you have to go home immediately.'

'I'll do it,' she responds. Crazy, indeed.

Later, she describes the experience as hot, sensual, seductive, orgasmic and unlike anything she's ever experienced before. The next morning she sends him a text. 'That was hot.'

I am having coffee with Jocelyn when she receives a text from Ken.

'Yes, that was hot,' he replies. 'But we can't do this again. I am still messed up over my ex. I won't be contacting you or seeing you for a long time.'

I watch as her face reddens and her heart appears to break into a million different pieces. Not because she's in love with him. Not because she thinks he's 'the one'. But because she's angry at herself for pegging so many false hopes on this man. I'm not saying that if she'd implemented The Chase things would have ended differently. I'm just saying that she never really gave it a chance. She didn't own the experience; instead she assumed that by giving him sex, she'd get some form of love, or at least recognition, in return.

Sex like a man

Ever tried to have sex like a man? By that I mean with no emotional connection, no expectation of eggs and bacon the following morning and no intention of seeing your lover ever again afterwards? I bet many of you have. And why shouldn't you dip your toes into the icy waters of one-night stands? After all, it's your right as a modern woman! It's what feminism was made for! It's what freemales do best!

DICTIONARY ALERT:

51.4% of women are 'FREEMALES'—the new breed of women described as 'Bridget Jones meets *Sex and The City*' who say they'd rather be single than share their lives with a man.

Most of us don't believe in commitment in many facets of our lives—staying in one job long-term has become a thing of the past, while social arrangements are cancelled on a whim with a text message—so why be committed to one man? Why not just hook up with many instead?

As my life coach friend Alina Berdichevsky explains: 'It's a way of sampling the goods without emotional investment.' Great! Hooray! Let's shout about it from atop our stilettos! But the question remains: does this approach work to get us what we want? Will hooking up lead to a long-term sustainable relationship that will make you feel whole? Apparently not.

Before I go into why casual sex is all a bit of a hoax, let me set the record straight. I am all for a woman owning her sexuality and claiming to be able to do it like a man, with no emotional strings or psychological connection. To be able to wake up the following morning and declare that she's okay with the pash and dash, the fuck and flee, and she is honestly NOT expecting a follow-up text, phone call,

Facebook message or invitation to his sister's wedding. If that's you—then go, girl!

But if that's not you, and you're sick and tired of playing the floozy card, then read on, because you can change your life, starting from NOW.

#14. CASUAL SEX IS GREAT:

. . . as long as you can handle the consequences: you don't expect a follow-up call from the dude you just bonked, and you feel empowered and proud of your actions the following day . . .

Let's return to Lulu, from 'A Cautionary Tale'. She once confided to me that it was okay that she slept with men she hardly knew because she could have sex like a man. 'Most women can't pull it off,' she said. 'But I can. I'm different.'

But something strange happened to her. Something went 'ping!' inside her—her biological clock had started up and suddenly she began to long for a man to commit to her in ways she'd never thought she wanted. And Mr Gym became that man. Suddenly, she wanted to be with him all the time. She wanted to talk to him, get texts from him, go to dinner with him, and even contemplated marrying him.

'I feel like I've been hypnotised,' she told me. 'What should I do? Tell him how I feel?'

#15. MAN-HOAX:

Just because you're obsessed with him, doesn't mean he's the last man on the planet. It's just the way being with him makes you feel about yourself, which is a carefully orchestrated plan by him. Find other ways to boost your ego!

Now, remember, this is the guy who's been treating her like Friday-night dessert. I couldn't tell Lulu what to do; the decision was entirely up to her. But what I could offer was an explanation I've gathered from hundreds of women who feel exactly the same way: the love-sick puppy response women get after casual sex is symptomatic of a chemical reaction that occurs only inside the female brain.

The oxytocin theory

For centuries, men have been having sex like it's something they've grabbed on the go. Yet women are genetically wired a little differently. Getting physical between the sheets—no matter how much fun modern women have while doing it—does something quite serious to the chemicals in our brains. Mr Ordinary becomes Mr Oh-So-Fabulous once we've shagged him, thanks to a hormone that gets released into our brain known as oxytocin, also dubbed 'the cuddle hormone'.

This is a devilish little chemical because, despite how many times we tell ourselves that we're not quite that into a guy on the first and second date, but decide to give him a go anyway, as soon as we hop into bed with the dude, the hormone starts to do its dirty work. According to psychiatrists at the California School of Professional Psychology,[1] it starts to stimulate maternal behaviour. And after a woman has repeatedly had sex with the same person, just seeing that person can release more oxytocin in her brain. In other words, we think we're soooo into this guy now simply because our bodies have tricked us into believing it's true. Hence we become desperate for him to call us, to declare his undying love, to father our babies and ask us to live happily ever after with him behind a white picket fence.

This is all good and fine if the guy you've just bonked is wildly in love with you too—and you'll know this not by his words, but by his actions—but right now we're focusing on what to do if this happens to you when you're NOT in a committed, monogamous relationship with the man and, in fact, he's holding you at arm's length from him. You sense something isn't right (and women are great at this kind of intuition so listen to it!) and so you feel that unless you chase, chase, chase him, he's not going to put any effort into taking things further with you.

Men also release oxytocin, but their testosterone neutralises it before it can affect their thoughts

and actions. We're not so lucky—the oestrogen in a woman's body magnifies and intensifies the effects of the hormone, making us all the more clingy.

#16. NO CASUAL SEX TIP:

Oxytocin is released every time you have sex . . . So whether you like it or not, it's going to wreak havoc on your emotional responses, hindering your ability to have sex like a man.

'It all makes sense now!' Jane squealed when I explained the oxytocin theory to her and Lulu. 'I wasn't even attracted to the Producer in the first place—but as soon as I'd had sex with him and we were cuddling afterwards, something changed. The next day I suddenly found myself thinking more and more about him. Even fantasising about him. And then willing him to call. And then sending him desperate text messages asking him where he'd been. That's so not like me!'

I nodded. I've seen it all before. While every woman loves to boast about her ability to have sex like a man, the oxytocin kicks in once she gets all caught up in a knot when he doesn't call. And tries to rectify the situation by sending him a barrage of flirty text messages. And even more texts when he doesn't reply, asking if everything is okay. Which effectively turns her into every other gal he's come into contact

with. *She was so sweet and pretty and seemingly normal,* he thinks. *What the fuck happened?*

Sex happened, that's what.

Don't be a slut

DICTIONARY ALERT:

SLUT (n): A woman who talks about sex, looks like sex and then offers up sex too soon, all before he's had a chance to implement his chase.

As we discussed in the last chapter, men thrive on the thrill of the hunt, The Chase, and they'll do everything in their power to capture their prey. But once they do, the game is over, their interest is no longer piqued and they move on to the next challenge. And the number one thing that stops The Chase in its tracks? Casual sex.

Unfortunately, ladies, we've been duped. Men don't actually like slutty women. I've asked them! They're not into us if, the moment we meet them, we tell about our sexual prowess or favourite sexual positions or what we'd like to do back at their place. Stop being desperate, girl, and remember what a Wonder Woman would do: keep him wondering.

Before we delve into how the Casanova you just had sex with views that night—and how he now

views you—let's take a quick trip back in time to when casual sex popped up on the sexual menu. It was around the time of the invention of the Pill in the 1960s, when Helen Gurley Brown—editor of *Cosmopolitan Magazine* and author of the zeitgeist-defining tome *Sex and the Single Girl*—told her readers that a woman should be able to have sex like a man. That women should be liberated, take control of their own bodies and learn to fuck and flee just like the gents had been doing for centuries.

Germaine Greer quickly jumped onto the go-girl band-wagon, enthusing that, yes, sex should be about the physical and not the emotional. She concurred that women shouldn't be so bloody possessive about their conquests and should lighten the hell up!

#17. WONDER WOMAN TIP:

Who cares what feminism dictates? If it doesn't suit you, and there's a very real chance you might fall into the obsessed-with-this-man-now category, don't do it!

As you can imagine, single women were over-joyed, tossing out their vibrators by the bucketload and putting their booty buddy on speed dial. (Okay, so they didn't have iPhones back then, but you get the picture.) 'Finally!' the women rejoiced. 'We can have sex like men without all the emotional hoo-ha that comes along with it.'

Unfortunately, the men quickly and gleefully caught on to this newfound mantra, and used it to their maximum advantage.

Now I know what you're thinking: *But men tell me they love it when women take charge of their sexuality!* Or, *But he said I was different!* And my favourite: *He said he only wanted to cuddle but things just got out of hand!*

I'm sure they did. Because that was his aim.

Men are notorious for saying or doing anything it takes to get you into bed. And I mean *anything.*

And while they might *pretend* they'll like you more if you hop into bed with them, or respect you more if you give them the best blow job of their lives, the truth is that the next day it's an entirely different, non-sexually charged ball-game.

The slut test

Ever heard of the 'slut test'? Neither had I. Until the men I interviewed enlightened me. The slut test is a little experiment men use to see whether or not a woman they've just met could be considered a long-term prospect or not. They use it when they decide to try to sleep with you within twenty-four hours of meeting you. If you give in, then they've gotten laid. If you don't, you're considered PGM (potential girlfriend material).

Still don't believe me? Think that it's okay to do it just this once because the guy's promised that he

won't turn off you afterwards like you're a bag of rotten bananas? Think again. Especially if you utter the proverbial 'Oh, I *never* do this sort of thing—you're special' line while tossing your shoes onto his floor and flinging yourself onto his mattress. Because while a man might pretend that he's into casual sex, the truth is that all men do the slut test, which is a win-win situation for them. If you fail the test, he gets laid, and you get put into the slut category. If you pass the test and he doesn't get laid he thinks you might be all right and then he'll decide whether to take you out on an actual date.

Now bear in this mind, ladies: NOT having casual sex with him doesn't guarantee that he's going to want a relationship with you. It just means that if he's completely uninterested in you after you refuse to get your gear off, then he was only after one thing. And by not giving it to him, you've saved yourself a whole lot of heartache and tears. If he only wanted one thing to start with, giving it to him is the worst-case scenario. But by not giving it to him? You've just confirmed what you might have suspected. Be thankful that you were able to realise this quickly enough and move on.

#18. WARNING:

Men are doing the slut test on you from the moment they meet you—don't fail it!

My newly single male friend Dane says that his last relationship taught him an invaluable lesson: 'No

matter what a woman says—never, ever date a chick who sleeps with you on the first date. Ever.'

Despite being in the throes of a vitriolic break-up (which has turned him into a nervous wreck) Dane kindly explains that when a woman sleeps with a man on the first date, the beginning of the relationship is filled with sparks, chemistry and a load of sexy time between the sheets. After that horizontal high wears off though, the relationship quickly goes south.

'There is no foundation to lean on when the fantasy wears off,' he tells me. 'Which is never a healthy or fun situation to find yourself in. Even if you're a guy.'

Now considering we're all modern femmes who don't adhere to such rules any longer, I asked him to elaborate so I could share his thoughts with women who aren't exactly sure about what stance to take.

'I don't really know,' he answered. 'Something's just different when you know she's probably done it with dozens of guys before you.'

How to pass the slut test with flying colours

- Ignore sleazy advances when you're out at a club—know that you're too good for that. Those types of men are prowling the place for one thing and one thing only. You don't want to be that girl, do you?
- Never go home with a guy you just met simply

because you think that's what he expects. Make sure it's what *you* want—and that you're aware of the repercussions. And the oxytocin effect.

- If a man has a reputation for being a bad boy and is notorious for using and tossing aside women like a used piece of chewing gum, don't bother getting to know him no matter how much of a smooth operator he is. You'll only fall into his trap, go home with him too soon, and be shoved into the slut category quicker than he can call you a cab after the deed is done. Remember, you can *never* change a bad boy.
- Know that despite what the guy may say, there's always, always going to be a test. No matter how charming or persuasive he's being, it's all just a test. Pass the test and you might get a follow-up phone call. Fail the test and there's no doubt you won't hear from him again. Instead you'll end up chasing a man who doesn't want to have anything to do with you. Why put yourself through that?
- Stop thinking about the instant gratification of casual sex. Don't go for the candy sex just because it's been a while, or you think this guy might be 'the one' and you don't want to mess it up by making him wait. You'll mess it up even worse by sleeping with him, failing the test, becoming obsessed with him and then entering stalker territory in an attempt to get him interested in you. Even the sanest of women can morph into a desperado at the drop of her Bonds underwear.

What men will do/say/ purchase to get you into bed

Whether he's a nice guy or a bad boy, most men have sex on their minds. Therefore they'll let almost nothing stop them from finding someone to do it with. Even if they have to fake their interest.

So how do they woo you into the sack? What tricks of the trade do they employ?

#19. MAN PICK-UP ALERT:

The Breeder Tactic: Biologically, women are hot-wired to be attracted to a bloke who can 'invest in parenthood'. Hence, if a man mentions marriage, babies or commitment within moments of meeting you, it's supposed to get your pheromones going faster than spotting Hugh Jackman at the beach, sans his T-shirt!

Unfortunately, bachelors the world over have discovered the charm and appeal of mentioning to a woman they've just met that their goal is to start a family. Take actor Hugh Grant, who told *Vanity Fair* magazine a few years ago that he was hanging up his bad-boy persona as he was ready to get married and have children.

'If I went to a party tonight and bumped into a fantastic girl—whereas three years ago it might have

led to a short-term relationship—now I definitely keep my thoughts open to the idea of settling down and breeding,' he quipped.

Then there's male model Adam Perry, who, after posing bare-chested while cradling a baby, became so popular that he went on to sleep with a whopping 3000 women.

But talk of family values isn't the only warning sign you need to look out for . . . Here are some lines men have disclosed to me that they will use to get YOU into bed:

- I don't want to sleep with you, I just want to spoon.
- I just need to get something from my place on the way to the next club. Do you mind coming up?
- Let's skip all the formal dinner shenanigans. It's so boring. Want to come to my place later?
- Want to watch a DVD together tonight?
- Want to come over and chill?
- Invite me over!
- We have great chemistry.
- You and I have so much in common!
- Want to get out of here and go somewhere less noisy? I promise I'll behave.
- I love your accent.
- God, you're so hot.
- Did I mention you're hot?
- Great rack. Want to fuck?
- Are you on the Pill?

- My roommates have locked me out—do you mind if I stay at your place till they come home?
- We're having an after party at my place tonight. You should come.

#20. WONDER WOMAN TIP:

Stick to your principles, stand your ground and don't get sucked into his game.

After-sex reactions

Men and women have vastly different chemical reactions to sex. Don't get duped into thinking he feels the same way after the deed as you do. He doesn't.

After sex, a man's dopamine levels drop dramatically, making the woman he's just bonked less attractive and less desirable, which means it's less likely that he's going to call her in the morning.

Did you hear me? I think this statement—which should become your new mantra—deserves a repeat. A man's dopamine levels drop so dramatically that suddenly you—the person he's just bonked—are seen as less attractive, less desirable and it's less likely you're ever going to hear from him again. Unless, of course, you made the effort to actually date the dude before you hopped into the sack with him.

Women experience the opposite effect. The

increased oestrogen released during sex increases the effects of oxytocin in our brain, leading us to believe we're *more in love and attached to the man we've just slept with* than we were before the deed. (Which, apparently, is the reason so many women suggest men get into Tantric sex so they don't need to orgasm at all!)

Once she's done, she wants to bond. Once he's done, he wants to go to sleep and then get rid of the woman as quickly as possible. Add to that the fact that studies[2] have been done that prove a single man's testosterone levels are much higher than those of a married man and it's easy to see why casual sex should be nowhere near your sexual menu.

#21. AFTER SEX WARNING: MEN WANT TO GET RID OF YOU AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

His dopamine levels have dropped, he's tired and needs his rest. You just want to cuddle. And have his babies. No wonder he never called.

When it comes to a man's biological reflexes, his brain is telling him that he's got what he wanted. He's won The Chase, he's caught his prey, and now he's completely and entirely OVER the whole thing. Including you. No matter how good you were in bed, or what he said to make you stay for pancakes, you're now just another notch on his belt. No matter how many

times you made him come. No matter how loudly you yelled when you had your multiple orgasms. He doesn't give a toss. He's thinking about the rugby. Or pizza. Or work. Or sleep.

Now, don't get me wrong. This doesn't happen every single time without fail. There are exceptions to the rule. But in all my years of writing my column, I never heard a single man say that the woman who jumped in the cab home with him after a night out turned out to be 'the one'.

'Act like a prostitute and we'll think of you as one,' many of them say.

Yes, he *might* date her for a little while. He might even introduce her to his friends. But the inevitable thought, *She slept with me so easily—how many other guys has she done this with?* will creep back into his mind sooner or later. And then he'll begin to have his doubts. And then he'll begin to pull back. And then the relationship will fizzle out quickly.

So, ladies, unless you have more testosterone in your body than the average male, I don't want to hear any more about it. Don't even try to use some pathetic excuse like 'If I don't sleep with him tonight, some other girl will' or 'He'll dump me if I don't have sex with him right away', because you should have more self-respect, pride and self-esteem than that. Let the other floozy sleep with him instead. Because I guarantee that in a few days' time—or even a few hours after they've done the dirty—she'll be tossed out the

door. And you—the girl who held out—will still be under consideration as a long-term prospect. If this guy happens to be what you're after.

Just-the-tip Sex (JTTS)

DICTIONARY ALERT:

JTTS: Sex with a man that involves 'everything but' going the full monty. Newsflash: it's just the same to him . . . if you made him come.

Ever heard the expression 'just the tip'? Or 'we did everything but'? This is terminology used to explain the fact that although you were desperate to have sex with a man, you decided that you'd do 'everything but' the penetration. You rationalised that if you keep the actual sex out of the equation, it might prevent all the chemical reactions described above from taking place.

But if you think you're safe from the usual casual sex repercussions by doing 'everything but' on the first date, or soon thereafter, you're highly mistaken. Any time bodily fluids are swapped, secreted or leaked, the same consequences will occur.

Take Kendell's story.

'I met a guy that I felt fairly comfortable with. I went back to his place after we had a few drinks at a bar, and we ripped off all our clothes. I told him I wasn't going to sleep with him and he told me that was okay.

I really liked him so we did "everything but" anyway. It was fantastic, but I can't help feeling that even though we didn't have sex, I still ruined the mystery.'

True to Kendell's misgivings, the guy didn't make nearly the same effort he had been making before the mistaken JTTS. The Chase was over.

Everyone has their own standards of how far they're willing to go and when, but just to let you know: men don't really see you giving them a blow job as any different to you having sex with them. If they have an orgasm, they have an orgasm, regardless of how they got there.

As my friend Patrick explained, 'When a woman gave me a blow job the other night in the bathroom at a club, it was no different to if she'd slept with me. I still see her in the same light.'

#22. WARNING:

BLOW JOBS AREN'T PARTY FAVOURS—giving them out isn't going to make a man fall in love with you any sooner . . . so don't!

The conga-line theory

The worst parts about casual sex are the unreturned text messages, the feeling that you've been duped, that you've been coerced into bed, lied to, callously dumped and are now just another notch on his belt.

I'd love to be able to tell you that this isn't the case; to dispel this myth. I'd love to tell you that if you do give it up too soon, everything is going to be okay and the guy in question is still going to think of you as a long-term prospect. That you do indeed have a shot. That you should shout it out from the rooftops that he could be 'the one' and you'd like to introduce him to your folks because he got your juices going and you shared an intimate moment with him. No such luck, honey.

I often tell women that the reason a man hasn't called after sex is most likely because he's actually having sex with someone else the next night. And by the time you decide to call him, he's already onto the third or fourth woman since you. I call it the 'conga-line theory'.

#23. CONGA-LINE THEORY:

He's not ignoring you—he's just busy having sex with someone else.

Many women refuse to believe me, and maintain that it's just that there's a shortage of nice guys out there available for the picking. So I decided to interview one such nice guy to find out which of us is right. Patrick is twenty-nine, a successful television producer, who, until a few years ago, was in a committed long-term relationship and contemplating proposing to the

woman he'd dubbed the 'love of his life'. That didn't work out, and now it's a very different man sitting in front of me smoking a cigarette as he regales the past week's schedule of sexual antics.

Life for him has reached a new sexual peak—or a nadir, depending on which way you look at it.

'Women think I'm an asshole because I don't text them back or take them out for dinner,' he says. 'But I've never lied to get a woman into bed. And I've never promised anything beyond that. I'm actually a really nice, honest guy.'

When I ask him for a description of his week, he told me this:

Patrick's sexual schedule

Wednesday, 2 pm: Meet Girl #1 walking on the street. She is gorgeous, twenty-seven. I put my number on her scooter. She calls later that day. I ask her for dinner on Friday night. She agrees.

Friday, 9 pm: Take Girl #1 for dinner and drinks. I bump into Girl #2, who I had sex with last week, having dinner at same restaurant. I tell Girl #2 that I'm at a work dinner. She believes me. I go home and have sex with Girl #1.

Saturday, 10 am: Wake up hungover. I kick out Girl #1. After she leaves, I call Girl #2 and she invites me to her place.

Saturday, 3 pm: Watch a DVD at Girl #2's place. We have sex.

Saturday, 10 pm: At the club I spot Girl #3. We have kissed before. She tells me she's there specifically to see me. We go to the bathroom together and she gives me a blow job. While she's doing it, she stops and tells me she's been thinking and she doesn't want to be like every other girl. I tell her she thinks too much. Shortly afterwards she leaves.

Sunday, 3 am: Girl #4 is flirting with me at a club. She tells me she likes me. I ask her if she wants to get out of there. She obliges but says she doesn't want to have sex. Instead she asks me if I want to meet her for lunch the following day. I laugh and tell her I just want to spoon anyway, so we go back to her place. We spoon for two minutes and then we have sex.

Sunday, 11 am: Wake up with a hangover in Girl #4's bed. I am desperate to get the hell out of there and go home to a warm shower and put on clean clothes.

Wednesday, 10 am: Get a text message from Girl #2: 'I don't have time for people who have work dinners with strange women on Friday nights at 9 pm.' Text back: 'What are you on about? We saw each other on Saturday and everything was fine?' She replies: 'Yes, but I've had some time to think about it. And I don't like it. Goodbye.' I text back: 'You think too much.'

Thursday, 8 pm: Can't stop thinking about Girl #2. She has given me a challenge and now I am eager to chase her. To see if I can break her. I give her a call. She comes over. We have sex.

Saturday, 2 am: I am out with Girl #1. I get a text from Girl #4. She tells me she has a present for me: 'I bought you a pack of M&Ms.' Respond: 'It's 2 am. Go to bed.' She texts again: 'I want to see you. I just want to give you a hug.' I don't reply. I want to go home, alone. I am tired of all these women so I switch off my phone.

Sunday, 12 pm: Wake up alone, satisfied and content. And then I find myself thinking about my ex-girlfriend—the one who was the love of my life. The one I dated for four years before all this nonsense. I wonder if we'll ever get back together.

So, ladies. What does this tell us? Stop being the desperate girl who'll end up as just another notch on his belt. If you sleep with him on the first night, he'll see you as just another slut. It sucks, but it's true. Don't become a number in his conga line. You're better than that.

The No Casual Sex Challenge!

Ladies, we've all experienced that horror moment where we find ourselves yet again pining for a guy we've slept with once and never seen again and realise this is exactly what happened last time we met a guy, and the time before. I am sick to death of seeing my single girlfriends getting caught up in relationships that are going nowhere and yet they can't give up on the cad simply because they've swapped a few bodily fluids with him. So this is my personal solution to all those casual-sex-cycle woes—the 30-Day No Casual Sex Challenge.

I'm not saying you can't have fun and enjoy yourself for the next thirty days. In fact, quite the opposite! Think of this as a boot camp for your mind, body and soul. As Lucille Ball once said: 'Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world.'

One girlfriend who I put on the challenge told me how, after a successful date with a bloke she'd been pursuing, she refused to let him come up to her apartment when he dropped her home. 'You'll have to turn your car around now . . . go on,' she said to him. 'I'm on the challenge and can't have any temptations!' Suffice to say, the man didn't give up on wooing and romancing her, which is exactly the aim!

Another woman wrote in to tell me that she cancelled a date with a man who she suspected was

only interested in getting into her pants, which meant that she successfully saved herself heartache, disappointment and that feeling in the pit of your stomach when you realise you've slept with a cad who doesn't give two hoots about you. Ah yes, mission accomplished.

To get the ball rolling, photocopy the 30-day No Casual Sex contract in this book (or you can email me at asksambrett@gmail.com), sign it, put it up on your wall or on your bathroom mirror and read it every day. Anyone is eligible to take the challenge, as long as you're not in a committed, exclusive relationship that's been going for a month or more.

What you can expect as your reward

- To be taken on a proper date without any expectations at the end of the night.
- No pressure or worry about when to have sex.
- Able to discover when a guy really is into you.
- No wasting your time on a guy who isn't into you.
- No longer being considered as a 'booty call'.
- Possibly finding true love.

SAMANTHA BRETT'S 30-DAY NO CASUAL SEX CONTRACT

I, _____, the Single Female, do hereby agree to abstain from having casual sex for 30 days with any man that I am not in a committed, monogamous relationship with.

This includes:

- Ex-boyfriends
- Celebrities
- Anyone in a rock band
- Anyone I meet at a bar
- Any man who calls me after 10 pm for a booty call
- Any man who tells me he loves me on the first date
- Any man who says he'll lose interest unless I sleep with him
- A man who's read *The Game* by Neil Strauss and agrees with it
- My personal trainer, web developer, boss or subordinate at work.

I hereby acknowledge that failure to abide by these rules will result in me being used for my body, getting my heart broken and obsessing over some guy who's just not that into me.

I hereby agree that by signing this contract, I am beginning my 30 days of celibacy in order to attract a decent, loyal, kind-hearted man who is worthy of my affections.

Signed:

_____

The Single Female

_____

The Witness

Date: _____

The 30-day No Casual Sex Program

Day 1

Use all those hours that you would be wasting thinking about a man to reflect on yourself instead. Do something nice for yourself: get a massage, have a facial, read a book you've been putting off.

Days 2–4

Write your 'Ideal Man List' (see Chapter 6). This requires you to sit down in a quiet space with your favourite music on your iPod and come up with a list of qualities that you want in a man. Put the list underneath your mattress. So it can seep into your subconscious as you sleep.

Days 5–10

Spend some time nourishing your soul. Go into a quiet space (without your iPod) and picture yourself at a time when you felt most happy and at peace. Maybe it was in a certain place or doing a certain activity. The aim is to work out where your soul feels most connected, at peace and valued. Over the next week, go to that place or participate in that activity and experience that feeling. It may be as simple as walking down to your

neighbourhood park every afternoon with your favourite novel and turning off your mobile phone for an hour. Or taking up yoga. Or catching up with an old friend that you haven't seen in a while. Or taking a trip to Paris!

Day 11

Schedule in one day a week to meet a different girlfriend for drinks at fun places. Call them up and book them in.

Days 12–29

Live your life the way you want to live it. Dare to dream; follow through on things you otherwise would have put off because you were busy thinking about a man you slept with too soon who hadn't called; catch up with your friends; go on dates and have a ball.

Day 30

Gather together a bunch of girlfriends and participate in a FEMALE-FRIENDLY activity. That means no men! Talk about your newfound power and make a pact never again to put yourself in a position where you become a desperate, jaded, forlorn singleton waiting for a man to call. You're in control now!

A Cautionary Tale: Poppy

Party girls are a thing. *A small subset of women so beautiful—and God, don't they know it—that they're able to play men like a fiddle, both mentally and sexually. These types of women are so sexually confident, they can and do have sex like a man without it really affecting their psyches.*

While the men usually view these women like 'candy', a quick fix to their egotistical sexual woes, Poppy Belle was a self-proclaimed party girl, and if one man wasn't satisfying her partying urge, she'd simple move on to the next. She knew how to manoeuvre men like pawns on a chessboard and was a master at picking them up, getting them to fall in love with her, then tossing them aside like a piece of old chewing gum. And since she could have her pick of the bunch, she usually

#24. MEN AND THE CANDY GIRL THEORY:

Party girls, floozies, slutty women are all seen as 'candy' to men. They'll never take you seriously (or so the men told me). Yes, they'll date you, fuck you, maybe even wine and dine you. But they'll never take you home to meet their mum. You're just not the marrying type . . . until you give up your hard partying ways . . .

only went for men who were wealthy, famous or had something she wanted. Since Poppy had dated so many men, she knew all about types like the Producer that Jane had got herself into such a funk over. Poppy was always one step ahead of these men. That was, until Doug came along.

She'd hardly taken any notice of him when her agent had introduced them at some red-carpet cocktail party. A bit stiff, *she'd thought. Still, he was attractive in that George Clooney-esque way, despite his age. He had a slick crop of greying hair, tanned gold-flecked skin that was more Positano than Venice Beach, and he was a little taller than her, which was often difficult to find considering she was a statuesque six feet tall. Doug had a slim, toned body, which he usually clothed in a leather jacket and torn denims.*

Poppy was informed by her agent that Doug was heir to a billionaire fortune, and so, on her agent's recommendation, she decided to try him out. After all, she had just turned thirty, and wasn't going to wait around forever for Mr Right. She wanted Mr Right Now.

The minute they started dating, Doug revelled in the fact that his friends were impressed by his new arm-candy. He liked the status that came with being the media darling's older, newer, more sophisticated date. So he decided, just this once, to play his cards right. He wined and dined her, supported her and doted on her. She fucked and blew him as often as he requested, and flirted with his friends. Just to make him happy.

When Doug introduced Poppy to his waspish mother and she turned up her nose, calling Poppy 'trash', Doug did

nothing to make Poppy feel more comfortable. Poppy didn't really care. She realised that he was weak, passive and no match for her feisty nature, ambition and non-caring attitude, but she stuck around. After all, he had a waterfront apartment, his own luxury yacht and could give her the jet-set lifestyle she'd always dreamed of. Because even though Poppy was a successful model who hobnobbed with the likes of Paris Hilton and Richard Branson, and had dated the who's who of eligible bachelors (including one A-list actor who'd got her front-page headlines for all the wrong reasons), she was still struggling to stay on her feet. The bills were pouring in, yet she refused to take a step back from her extravagant lifestyle.

Gradually, Poppy became more and more attached to Doug. One balmy summer evening, after they'd had sex on his yacht, she told him she loved him. She waited for his response, but he simply shrugged his shoulders.

'I don't really believe in love,' he said. 'But you're fun.' And he cupped her breasts and made love to her again.

#25. MEN WITHOUT BACKBONE:

Dating a man without a backbone is like going on a diet that involves eating chocolate cake for lunch. It's never going to work. While he might seem sweet, doting and loving, if he's not going to stick up for you, cherish you, look after you and support you, there's no point in continuing things further. Don't drag this one out—you'll only get burned . . .

When Poppy got a call from her agent telling her that she was to front a new advertising campaign for a high-end perfume, she was elated. The only catch? It was to be shot in Fiji over two weeks. She knew she'd miss Doug terribly, but this was a chance of a lifetime.

At the airport she told Doug how she felt. 'I love you. And I want to know you feel the same way about me.'

'Of course I do, Princess,' he said. He kissed her on her neck and promised he'd call her everyday while she was gone.

True to his word, he did, leaving her a trail of saccharine-sweet messages. Maybe this could work, *she thought. Yes, she'd make it work. After all, there were handbags that needed to be purchased. Botox to be paid for. A public front that she needed to keep up.*

#26. CANDY GIRL WARNING:

Don't be blinded by your own ego to see the situation for what it is. If you're not being treated the way you deserve, walk away. No man—no matter how wealthy, famous, successful, good-looking or fun he is to hang around with—is worth a broken heart.

3

Candy Girls: Why you're not seen as worthy prey

I've yet to be on a campus where most women weren't worrying about some aspect of combining marriage, children, and a career. I've yet to find one where many men were worrying about the same thing.

Gloria Steinem

Women have a wonderful instinct about things. They can discover everything except the obvious.

Oscar Wilde

'But I need a man!'

Neediness is by far the biggest male turn-off, aside from nagging, farting, hair extensions and way too much fake tan—you get the picture . . .

Despite Irina Dunn's infamous premise that 'A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle', evolution dictates that it's quite the opposite: women are pre-programmed to *need* men.

That's right, ladies. You no longer have to feel guilty about your everlasting quest to nab yourself a decent man. You can now blame your DNA instead! If the thesis of evolutionary psychologist Dr Nick Neave is anything to go by, then needing a man is unavoidable because it stems from our primeval urges.

Says Neave: 'It goes back to the key differences which have developed between the sexes since men were hunter-gatherers and women were child-bearers . . . Females are smaller and weaker than males so, in prehistoric times, women and their offspring were prone to being the victims of predators, and violence.'[3]

Hence women have always been drawn to strong men. 'They needed the support and protection of men who didn't just have brute force but also had social status in the group, either through their sheer physicality or the strength of their personality. That's why women still look for a mate of higher social standing.'[4]

No matter how glamorous Carrie Bradshaw et al make single life look, the female primeval priority is not to clock up a wardrobe of Jimmy Choos, but to find a man and to hang on to him for dear life. True, the new breed of freemales (as they are so dubbed by the media) purport to do wonderfully without a man to hold their hand, buy them flowers or stand beside them and hold their handbag on the red carpet. And sure, they can devour ice-cream in bed, watch their favourite chick flick and flirt, flirt, flirt as much as their single heart desires. But perhaps ultimately it comes down to what singer Cher once said: 'I don't need a man. But I'm happier with one.'

#27. CANDY GIRL WARNING:

DON'T BE NEEDY. Men don't like to think you've got this grand plan that they need to slot into. While you can admit to yourself you need a man, NEVER under any circumstances relay this little fact to him. You are breezy and beautiful, and if he wants to be part of your brilliant life, you MAY let him in, if he plays HIS cards right.

While I'm telling you that it's okay to admit to *needing* a man (albeit to yourself only), according to the men I interviewed, modern women have gone mad. Men know we all think there's a single man shortage; that all the decent ones are either married or gay, and so

a single man about town who doesn't live with his mum or have a criminal record is hot, hot, hot property. Hence he can do what he wants, when he wants, and hordes of women will still fall hopelessly at his feet when he declares he's horny.

I've seen it all too often: gorgeous, smart women with fabulous careers wasting all their time courting players, bad boys and toxic types who are looking for nothing more than a quick pash and dash. I'm even compelled to support Quentin Crisp's theory that, 'Men get laid, but women get screwed.'

'But what happened to our freedom to be who we want to be?' I hear you scoff. 'What happened to our right to talk about sex, do it like a man and be unafraid to say what we want?'

Unfortunately for us, Candy Girl behaviour is easy to slip into. There's the Bridget Jones Clone, the party girl, the damaged goods syndrome, the slut and the alpha female. And while all of us would probably fit into one, if not more of these categories, the minute a man lays eyes on any of these personality traits—no matter how taut her butt is or waxed her bits are or how good she is at going down on him—he's going to take it for exactly what it is: a quick bite of candy, and nothing more.

And the men aren't reacting warmly to it. That's why I'm going to share with you my Candy Girl warnings, all in the name of tough love.

Candy Girl I: The Bridget Jones Clone

The BJC is the type of woman men abhor, but so many women tend to become—a sex-crazed floozy desperately vying for the attention of any man as long as he earns a decent salary, looks a little like Jake Gyllenhaal and isn't a serial killer.

Case in point is this tale from journalist and single man-about-town Gareth Sibson. On his third date with a woman he was mildly getting into, Gareth stumbled across a notebook lying on her kitchen table. Figuring they were no longer strangers, he took a peek at it while she was getting ready in the other room. What he found shocked him.

'There, in blue ink, she'd repeatedly written her first name and my surname,' he said.

He couldn't believe that a thirty-something woman who claimed to be independent and said her life didn't revolve around finding Mr Right was behaving like a

#28. CANDY GIRL WARNING:

Under no circumstances are you to EVER freak out a man by talking about marriage, babies or commitment on the first date—or even within the first SIX MONTHS of dating. Don't do it, unless you want to lose your guy in less than ten days.

fifth-grader. Instead of Gareth finding her scribblings flattering, he saw them as a sign of desperation.

What the hell has happened to us women? How have so many if us got lost, stumbled off the male-attracting radar and right into scary-woman territory?

Take the example of my friend Elle, who insists on telling every first date that she wants to get married and have two babies within the next three years. *On the first date!* The men all freak, as to be expected. When Elle came to me wondering why the heck she could never get a second date, I urged her to try keeping her long-term plan in her panties, at least until she'd been dating a man for three months or more.

'But what if he has other goals and I don't find out till it's too late?' she said.

'He will always have other plans until you prove that you're worthy enough to be part of them,' I explained. 'Men manage their lives on a case-by-case basis. If the right girl comes along, all their other plans go out the window and they make room for her. But if you push too soon, they'll see it as ambush tactics. And you'll be kicked to the curb before you know it.'

Don't get me wrong. I admire modern women who speak their minds, know what they want and ditch a bloke whose life goals aren't in sync with their own. However, the truth is, men aren't going to respond to those kinds of demands out of fear that you're going to be the type of woman to rule their lives with an iron stiletto. You're ruining their Chase.

When Elle went on another first date and held back from divulging her three-year plan, she was amazed at the results. 'He's asked me out again!' she told me excitedly. And, six months on, he's recently popped the question. The funniest part is that she didn't even mention to him that she wanted to get married—he figured it out all on his own.

I know some women might scoff at this advice, seeing it as an archaic pre-feminist relic, but perhaps if we hold off on pressuring a guy into a relationship, on pushing him to have kids, he might be the one to run to you. And that's exactly what you want to happen.

From the Male Room

'I think women have forgotten how to be ladies. An Audrey Hepburn or Grace Kelly type, who is flirtatious but cautious, is what modern men are going for these days. The up-front Sex and the City *type woman is what men who want one-night stands look for, but if you're an everyday bloke, you just want to take things slow. The main problem with Bridget clones is that they're still trying to live their lives like people on television instead of finding out who they are. Being true to yourself and being honest but not exploitative will win a man's heart.'*—**Marc**

'Stop being desperate to find and impress a bloke because desperation can be smelled a mile off. Get a

life and friends of your own and you won't need a boyfriend anyway, and if you're interesting and fun enough a nice one might come along.'—**Bart**

Candy Girl II: The party girl

She might be fun for a one-night fling, but a man is never going to introduce the party girl to his folks, his boss or any member of his inner circle. She's great as a temporary handbag for the night, nothing more.

The party girl is the one who always ends up at the bad boy's house, albeit a little too early in the union. She claims she owns her own sexuality and therefore can have sex like a man without emotional attachment, but I often get phone calls from these types of women lamenting that despite the fact she slept with him knowing he has commitment issues and a secret girlfriend waiting innocently and unsuspectingly in the wings, she still fell into his trap. 'He treats me differently from everyone else,' she'll tell me. And then he'll call and she'll act like he's the last man on the planet. Party girls are addicted to the drama a bad boy gives her. He's like a sugar rush.

The party girl's different to the BJC in that she wholly believes she is 100 per cent in control of the situation the entire time. That is until the bad boy gets underneath her skin.

True, the party girl often carries out The Chase to perfection, and there is plenty to learn from her. But the problems start when the party girl awakes alone in her bed aged thirty plus after her bad boy has cheated on her and hasn't paid back the money she lent him. It's then she realises that the partying game is over and she's not sure how to turn things around.

From the Male Room

'Men don't marry these party girls. If they're thirty, they're most likely damaged/used goods unless they came out of a convent. Basically, most of them are a fuck and chuck. If the guy is over thirty and he wants to start a family, then do it with a young twenty-something, not a loosened-up thirty-year-old.'—**John**

'My fellow men . . . you should never consider marrying the following:

1. *A party girl—she has seen and done all . . . and is looking for the next "excitement", which may include leaving you.*
2. *A woman over thirty—she has become jaded, desperate, set in her ways, has emotional baggage, and is full of expectation.*
3. *A career woman—too focused on assets, materialistic, sits on her throne expectantly, with very little time for you.'*—**Cretin**

'No guy will admit it but nobody wants some chick who has been skanking and slutting her way to thirty, and then decides she wants to settle down with a "nice marrying type" . . . In life, you reap what you sow . . .'—**Columb**

'I think the party girl is finally paying the price. She's spent her twenties dating bad boys and players (ie guys that were great-looking and/or wealthy and gave her a great time but would never take her seriously, just wishful thinking on her part). I think I'd prefer someone much cleaner than a used and abused party girl. Don't know why so many women don't learn this lesson a lot sooner, seems a pretty obvious one to me. An ex-party girl at thirty doesn't seem to offer too much that others haven't already taken when she was in her prime. Even though I'm thirty-three I have more twenty-year-olds interested than ever so if I'm going to have a party girl (especially given they age pretty quickly) I may as well have her when she's looking her best.'—**Robert**

Candy Girl III: Damaged goods syndrome

There's a vicious term doing the rounds on Planet Dating that is getting single women in a tizzy. Sexist, highly insulting and downright rude, it invariably comes up in conversation when men are sitting around

a poker table after one too many beers have been consumed. The phrase I'm talking about is 'damaged goods'.

While men refuse to date women they perceive to be suffering from damaged goods syndrome (DGS) many of us are left mightily confused as to what exactly the term means.

One male friend defines DGS as 'anyone who's been in a long-term relationship before you start dating them' (which pretty much describes the majority of the thirty-something population!). Another defines DGS as 'a woman who has been married before, has kids, still talks to her ex and is cynical about men'. A third says it's 'any woman who's been dumped, abused or cheated on'.

It's all a bit unfair really. While a man will give himself permission to shag, date and dump anything in a skirt as many times as his heart desires, he won't give women any leeway for even the slightest sexual indiscretion. Shag the wrong bloke, get knocked up or make the decision to have kids sans a ring on your finger and suddenly you're stuck with the unshakable DGS label. Which all seems odd considering that since the Pill arrived in the 1960s, women have been having sex without the burdens of marriage, emotions or monogamy. Having kids without getting married is no longer considered taboo, and with divorce rates reaching 50 per cent of all marriages, you'd be hard-pressed to find someone who hasn't already walked down the aisle

once. But when I put the topic up on my column, I was surprised by the number of men who responded, showing just how widespread the DGS concept is.

One male reader, BeniBonanza, wrote: 'Men can sense a woman with lots of baggage and thus refer to her as damaged goods. For example: ladies, if you mention your ex on multiple occasions within your first three dates, you are damaged goods. We call it as it is.'

While this might seem a little harsh and slightly unfair (considering most people have been burnt by a nasty ex), the fact of the matter is that we could have two kids, be divorced and have more baggage than Posh Spice boarding a flight to LA and yet if we act breezy and in-the-moment, rather than focusing on our sordid past, it's likely men will be attracted to us regardless of the baggage we carry.

#29. CANDY GIRL TIP:

The Chase is all about NOT laying your cards on the table in a needy way. Whether you have baggage or not, he doesn't need to hear you harp on and on about it. You're worth it no matter how many suitcases you carry!

Think of the latest Hollywood single mums who can indeed date, shag and be damn hot while they're doing it, despite the fact they are potential 'damaged

goods'. Look at Angelina Jolie—her baggage definitely hasn't been a deterrent!

As image consultant Mark Stevens told the *New York Daily News*: 'Forget about the mom stuff. It's all about sex . . . I think women—celebrity and real—are selling their sex appeal before their maternal instincts. They're not asking guys to change diapers.'[5]

My colleague, Nick, thirty and single, summed it up best when he said: 'The more important part of being damaged is being too stubborn or fearful to adapt to new surroundings and new situations.'

On the other hand, Sienna, a single gal, told me: 'Who cares what other people think of you. You are not defined by others. I would just laugh off anyone who said I was "damaged goods". . . no-one is perfect!'

Amen to that.

From the Male Room

'My last girlfriend always reminded me that she didn't want to be the "get over girl" and yet the constant reminder of it somehow proved it to be true. The same girlfriend stated she didn't wish to be a Saturday-night-only girlfriend. She gave me a two–three times/nights a week minimum visitation order. Over time I thought, why bother?'—**OS&IDidThat2**

'Ladies, you need to take heed of this. It's obvious! If you feel you are damaged goods, don't portray it.

Guys don't give a toss about an ex, and in fact if he is mentioned regularly while you are dating someone, guys will bolt. And the term "damaged goods" will be used, and passed on to all his mates, and no-one will go near her. Hence, ladies, avoid being branded DG at all costs . . .'—**JD**

'Being "damaged goods" isn't about what you've done or who you've shagged. That is such a simplistic view! It is about the attitude! Any woman who thinks that "all men are alike" is heading in the damaged direction. A single mother isn't, by default, damaged, but if she's constantly shitty with her ex and all men in general, or desperately trying to find a new father for her child, then she probably is.

'A woman who's been in a long-term relationship isn't damaged by default, but if she's paranoid that you're going to leave her like all the men before you, or that you're going to turn out to be a loser too, then she is.

'I can't speak for all men, but as far as I'm concerned, the more experiences a woman has had, the better! She'll hopefully know herself better and know what she's looking for, but if she's jaded or bitter as a result, then she is "damaged goods" and I don't want to know her.'—**Shane**

#30. WONDER WOMAN LESSON:

Throw out the belief that you're inflicted with DGS and start thinking along the lines of Angelina Jolie. Your past only makes you more worldly, sexy, sophisticated, sexually experienced and with way more to offer than the average woman.

Candy Girl IV: The slut

Sadly, it seems women no longer have any qualms about analysing oral sex over egg-white omelettes and fruit salads. Many have mistaken true independence for some kind of desperate need to come across as a spanking-mad nymphomaniac in an attempt to impress their date.

True, men are visual creatures, and yes, many of them are addicted to the *Girls Gone Wild* DVD collection, but those kinds of women won't keep attracting a man's attention for long in the real world. Getting sloppy drunk, pashing strangers, pashing other women and flashing your tits at a man you've just met all put you firmly and squarely in the Candy Girl slut category. If you're serious about your love life, don't do it. Oh, and put some clothes on!

#31. CANDY GIRL WARNING:

Dress and act like a slut and the men will treat you as one. No matter what they pretend to be attracted to at first, you'll never be anything more to him than a one-night fling.

From the Male Room

'Slutty women are okay for a little while but the attraction never lasts. Sexy women are attractive forever. Stockings and suspenders are worn by both—it's what they wear over them that makes the difference. Sexy women don't feel the need to have everything hanging out. They know that the imagination is the real sex organ.'—**Sahara**

'Slutty women get all the attention as they are advertising that they are available. It is like putting a For Lease sign up in the window of a shop. If they do not put up a sign they will not get any takers. In the case where clothes are not an issue the advertisement must be made in some other fashion, or an unsolicited offer must be accepted. The reason for the trashy dress is that most women and men are not up for a new relationship. They are either currently in a relationship, recovering from a damaging relationship or simply not interested. Those with something to rent, lease or sell for perpetuity must advertise somehow and trashy dress is simply one means of advertising.'—**John**

Candy Girl V: The alpha female

Women are supposed to be in control of the dating game. We're supposed to be the choosers. But somehow things got misconstrued when women decided that they'd prefer to break balls in the boardroom than caress them in the bedroom. It seems Hollywood saw this coming. Think of Glenn Close's character Alex in *Fatal Attraction*: an independent and successful woman who is violently unstable. Or Sigourney Weaver in *Working Girl*, who ends up single and alone, and Meryl Streep in *The Devil Wears Prada*, who, despite all her success, ends up with a broken marriage.

Unfortunately for modern women, the alpha female concept is a whole different sexist ballgame. Our biological clocks may be ticking, but many of us are being slapped with the derogatory 'left on the shelf' label.

'Every woman I know—no matter how successful and ambitious—feels panic, occasionally coupled with desperation, if she hits thirty and finds herself unmarried,' author Lori Gottlieb wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly*.[6]

Just ask supermodel-turned-media-mogul Tyra Banks, who says that while she feels as though she's got it all when it comes to her work life, her home life paints an entirely different picture. 'I go home and put my key in my door and . . . nothing; no friends,

no husband, no children. I feel so full when I'm at work but so empty when I come home.'

Tyra's theory as to why she can't find a man is simple: 'I make a good living, so men my age get a little intimidated.'

American Idol judge Paula Abdul concurs. 'It's damn near impossible for a successful woman to date men who don't earn as much, but multiply that by a gazillion when you're famous,' she says. 'Men are intimidated by me, but I'm so not intimidating, other than I'm a really bright girl full of life. I either bring out the best in men or a dark side.'

The feminism mantra that promised women they could 'have it all' has backfired, leaving many single and lonely.

'Men would rather marry their secretaries than their bosses,' wrote John Schwartz of *The New York Times*. Sadly, there's evidence to back up his hypothesis. A British study found that while smarter men have more chance of getting married (for every 16-point increase in IQ for men, their marriage chances increase by 35 per cent), the stats aren't so good for smart women. For each 16-point increase, their chance of marrying decreases by 40 per cent. Ouch.

I admit that I'm an alpha female at work, but an 'alpha in beta clothing' in the bedroom. It's the only way to ensure your man's interest and ego remain intact. Because, according to men, the alpha female has become so focused on her career that she's got her

comeuppance: she's ended up sitting alone in her chic, expensively decorated apartment eating Chinese for one.

So my advice? Alpha females should quit putting the pressure on men, and let them realise that a long-term commitment to a successful woman doesn't mean life is over, but it's only beginning. I'm not saying you have to hide that you're smart, talented and brilliant at what you do. I'm merely suggesting that if you do want to settle down with a man, don't bust his balls over the fact that you make more money than he does. Men get threatened by this no matter how you put it. So let them make the decisions, take the lead and be the man in the relationship.

#32. ALPHA FEMALE TIP:

Act like an alpha in the boardroom, but put on your beta clothing in the bedroom or on a date. Don't dumb yourself down, but don't flash your cash, title and prominence in the workplace either. Let him take charge! He'll think of you as his Wonder Woman for it.

A Cautionary Tale: Jane

Jane couldn't stop thinking about the Producer. He was like a drug, and she was desperate for her next fix. Where the bloody hell was he? Why hadn't he contacted her?

She was onto her second martini while surfing the internet late one night in her new LA apartment where she'd recently moved. Everything in her career was working out perfectly. She had got her dream job as an entertainment reporter for LA's top morning show; she'd met great friends and she'd even been approached to write a style column for a local gossip magazine. Everything was on track. Except for one thing. The guy she liked had gone MIA. Hence she decided to log on and check the Producer's Facebook page. She needed to search for clues as to what the heck had transpired. She was, after all, an investigative reporter, and what good were her investigative skills if they weren't being put to good use in order to catch out a man?

As she scrolled through his latest photos, she noticed there were many of him with different women from all over the world. There was Ina from Scandinavia, Anya from New York, Ana from Belgium . . . God, it was all too weird.

She scrolled down further through some pics of him with well-known actors until she eventually found what she was looking for: the latest tagged pic was of him pashing a woman with cropped bleached-blonde hair and wearing a midriff-baring t-shirt that came to just below the underwire

*of her padded bra. She checked the date. The photo was loaded up two weeks after she'd left his house. The woman's butt-crack was visible above her hipster acid-wash jeans (*who the fuck wears acid wash jeans? *Jane thought) as the girl leaned on the Producer on a couch that looked oddly familiar.*

Are they at . . .? It can't be! *thought Jane. But it was: the tryst had taken place at the very same nightclub she'd been to with the Producer a few weeks before.*

Dammit, *Jane cursed.* I thought I was different! I thought I was special! I thought . . .

#33. YOU'RE NOT SPECIAL:

If you spend one amorous night with a man and he shows no signs of ever committing to you for real, no matter how good things were in bed, he is NOT INTO YOU. Stop chasing him. Stop thinking about him. And start detoxing off him. You are better than your one-night stand.

A few nights later, dejected and confused, Jane relayed the latest development in her Hollywood saga to friends over dinner. Not exactly her close friends—Poppy was still in Fiji, Abigail was in Hawaii. Instead she'd called her cameraman friend George who was always up for a free beer and lived around the corner. George had brought along his best mate, Matt. Jane didn't mind Matt being there—she actually needed a guy's opinion on the matter.

When Jane told the boys the story, they couldn't contain their laughter.

'I have to stifle a giggle every time I hear the "I don't normally have sex on the first date" excuse,' said Matt. 'You know the women are full of shit otherwise they wouldn't be there. That's why I have the slut test. If a woman sleeps with you on the first day you meet her, or within, say, twelve to twenty-four hours of meeting, she fails the test. It's a win-win for me. If she sleeps with me, then great. If not I may have actually found a girl I can respect.'

'Think about it from a guy's perspective,' said George, leaning over the table and dropping his voice to a whisper. 'If a woman sleeps with me that quickly, I wonder how many others have there been, you know?'

As Jane listened, her emotions swung between hurt, shame and anger at herself for getting sucked into the game.

'I'm sorry, Jane, but you're just another number,' George said. 'Another notch on his chicks-I've-fucked belt.'

'So I delete his phone number from my phone then?' Jane choked out, tears springing to her eyes.

'Do whatever you have to do as long as you never contact him again.'

Jane desperately wanted to call the Producer—to discover what the hell had gone so terribly wrong; and to tell him that she was over it. Or at least to hear his voice again. What had made him so quick to replace her with someone else, as easily as other people changed their bedsheets? It didn't make sense.

Then Jane considered the reality of the situation. It had been one night. One freaking night! And yet she'd projected so

many fantasies onto the Producer that, in her mind, they'd been through the entire dating rigmarole and were now madly in love and living happily ever after in his idyllic country house.

True, he'd whispered many sweet nothings to her. True, he'd made her promises that made her want to sing from the rooftops. And yes, he was amazing at going down on her. But his actions weren't matching his words. She needed to take action, and fast.

'He's freezing you out,' said Matt. 'I do it all the time.'

#34. THE FREEZE-OUT:

When he's realised he's made a big mistake by sleeping with you because now you're obsessed with him, he's going to do everything in his power to avoid any form of communication with you. Don't take it personally. He's freezing you out. And there's no flipping it any time soon.

Freezing me out? *she thought*. How dare he! *That was the final straw.*

4

Candy Men: Why too many from the same jar will make you sick

A man falls in love through his eyes,
a woman through her ears.

Woodrow Wyatt

It's not true that nice guys finish last. Nice guys are winners before the game even starts.

Addison Walker

Candy Men

It was Mae West who once said that in order to appreciate the nice guy you have to get burnt by the bad boy first. While I've repeated this line many times to disgruntled girlfriends who cannot understand 'why me?' when it comes to feeling the wrath of a cad, I have to disagree with Ms West. You see as women, we're drawn to the bad boys like moths to a flame. And the truth is that no matter how many times the bad boys stomp on our hearts in their alligator loafers, we can't help but continue to go back to the same breed of man time and time again.

It's no wonder we do it too considering that at first, the bad boys make us feel wonderfully high, exhilarated and powerful. Yet once it's all over (and it never lasts very long), we come crashing back down to earth so fast, we don't even feel the landing. And suddenly we become a junkie, desperate for our next quick fix.

So we find another bad boy to date. This time he pulls us in deeper. This time we tell ourselves it will end differently. Especially because we think we now know exactly how to change and manipulate him. After all, we've learned all the lessons from the last guy and this time we believe we've stepped up our game. We've discovered *The Chase.* We think we're in control.

Yet it always ends up the same. The rapacious high. And then the low. Until we turn around one day to find another woman's toothbrush sitting on his bathroom

cabinet right beside her carelessly strewn (or strategically placed) headband. And then we'll ask him what happened and why it's there, and he'll tell us to get the fuck out of his house.

After bad boy number two, you'd hope we'd learn our lesson. But alas, suddenly finding and changing bad boys into the guys we want them to be has become our sole mission. Suddenly we're on a path where man-shaping is imperative and turning him into a guy who dotes on us becomes our primary mission. Suddenly we're gorging ourselves on these men, hoping we can change them but they're making us sick to the stomach. Introducing the Candy Men, where too much of any type makes us feel ill.

The bad boy: The one who will inevitably break your heart

There's something so irresistibly charming about that rebellious, overly confident macho man, better known as the 'bad boy'. They're everywhere in Hollywood: Colin Farrell, George Clooney, Jude Law, 50 Cent and of course let's not forget Mr Daniel Cleaver aka Hugh Grant. These are men with a reputation for breaking hearts so why do women keep dating them?

#35. BAD BOY ALERT!

Bad boys are candy: a quick fix that gives you the ultimate high and then the ultimate low, spinning you into such a web of oblivion that you become addicted to the sugar fix. Avoid them at all costs.

Unfortunately, every woman believes that somehow, miraculously, she can be the one to change the bad boy. He's dated and slept with dozens of girls before her, but she remains committed to the fantasy that *she* will be the one to change him. But for a man there's no bigger ego boost than having a woman become overly infatuated by his charm, good looks and nonchalant manner so he sees absolutely no reason to change into a 'good boy'.

#36. BAD BOY ALERT 2:

They know all the tricks, the mind games and the right things to say to boost your ego and then pull you down. It's not THEM, it's the way they make YOU feel. Don't get caught in their lecherous web.

In an article in Australian *Vogue* titled 'The Unsuitable Boy', US psychologist Peter Jonason found that men who show 'the self-obsession of a narcissist, the impulsive and thrill-seeking behaviour of a psychopath

and the deceitful and exploitative nature of a Machiavelli' are actually more attractive to the female sex. This 'dark triad' of traits is essentially associated with 'high levels of self-interest and low levels of empathetic qualities'. Although such traits aren't attractive on paper, what is attractive about these men is the excitement and danger that come with dating them.

I interviewed self-proclaimed bad boy Steve Santagati to find out more. Steve, who's appeared on *Oprah* and written a bestselling book on the topic called *The MANual*, told me this . . .

Conversation with Steve Santagati—self-proclaimed bad boy expert

Sam: Can you ever change a bad boy?

Steve: You can't really change a bad boy but you can help a bad boy change himself. There are really only two things that change a bad boy, albeit he'll always have a naughty streak inside. The first is age. As he 'matures' and has had his fill of felines, he tends to look for the simplicity of one great woman to be with. The second is a woman who is a strong, independent, sometimes bad girl herself and really fun to be with. Oh, and did I mention she should be sexy/hot.

Sam: Is it worth ever dating a bad boy?

Steve: Yes, if you know what to expect and don't take it too seriously. Also, if you pay attention you will learn a ton.

Sam: Are you really dating four other women at once and should we realise that when we first start to date you?

Steve: You should always assume we are dating, planning to date, or have just dated at least four other women. However, if you decide to have sex with us request monogamy in that department. Explain the health risks etc.

Sam: Do some bad boys like to skip the dating process altogether?

Steve: All men like to skip dating and get right to bed. Duh! This isn't a romantic comedy we're living. However, the 'badder' we become, the more we like the dating process; attribute it to the way a cat plays with its prey before killing it.

Sam: How do you distinguish between a woman you want to date and someone you're just using to have a good time?

Steve: Very simply, by how smart she is, how hot she is (to us), and whether or not she can break our patterns and keep us on our toes/keep us guessing.

Sam: When a woman first meets you, what are the telltale signs that you're just a bad boy ready to mess with our head?

Steve: We're going to make you feel like you've known us your whole life. However, we never (at least, any decent man never does) go in thinking we want to hurt someone. Unless you hurt us first. We go in with the simple desire to seduce you, sleep with you, laugh and have fun. No more, no less.

Sam: Can a woman ever flip The Chase?

Steve: Obviously. But she has to know how men think and how to manipulate their actions.

Sam: If a bad boy texts a woman and she doesn't reply or is very aloof, will that make you MORE into her? Is that the way it works?

Steve: It's complicated. But you get the idea. However, this has to start from day one or no later than date three.

Sam: Are you just in it for The Chase?

Steve: In the words of the great band Motorhead, The Chase is more fun than the catch. I'm personally in it because I love women and I think you're fascinating. I don't want to be like you, sound like you, act like you, but I love observing how you see life.

Sam: How can a woman make herself become attracted to good guys?

Steve: You can't. All men are attracted to the same thing. It's up to you to weed out the idiots.

Sam: What steps can you take at the beginning to determine whether a guy is a bad boy or good guy?

Steve: Ha ha ha. Why should I tell you that? Okay, see how much he goes 'out of his way' for you. If he sucks in bed he's probably a 'good guy'. If he doesn't seem very available he's probably a bad boy.

Sam: If I have always attracted bad boys how do I change so I attract good guys?

Steve: You can't. The best thing you can do is to attract as many men as possible so you can pick out who you like. Trying to get some guy to like you is stupid, and it's how relationship experts, TV shows and doctors take advantage of women. Think about it. You have to reverse your psyche and not follow these idiots. Be bad, be really bad and you'll attract whomever you want. You'll see.

Sam: Essentially, how can we understand a bad boy's mind and psyche?

Steve: What does it all mean? To understand men you must love them. You must observe them and you

must be willing to make mistakes. I look at life very differently than most. I look at it as fun.

#37. BAD BOY FACT 3:

No Matter how much you believe a bad boy will change, he will not. Don't even attempt to think you can change him. You're only wasting your precious time, energy and heart.

The homme fatale

Unlike his female counterpart—think Sharon Stone from *Basic Instinct* or the women from *Desperate Housewives*—who will use all her sexual allure to get what she wants, the homme fatale is not nearly as pretty, sexy or seductive. The term was coined by the *New York Observer*, which describes him as follows: 'He's usually not the best-looking guy in the room . . . but unlike the typical womaniser, whose game is laughably easy to detect, the Homme Fatale's modus operandi is more emotional and controlling than it is physical, leaving a wreckage that is, in the end, more disastrous.'[7]

Unlike the bad boy, who will bonk you and flee, the homme fatale uses more complex techniques to trap you in his lecherous web—such as a series of late-night phone conversations, seemingly innocent dates that don't end back at his place, and pretending to listen

to your feelings for weeks on end. Once he's got you emotionally involved, he'll dump you.

The homme fatale is always one step ahead of you. You'll fall hopelessly in love with him and he'll let you believe you're the only one for him. For months on end. And then he'll pull the rug right out from underneath you. There is nothing you could have done to prevent this. It's not your fault that you didn't see it

#38. THE BROKEN HEARTS CLUB:

He is the worst sort of man. At least the player and the bad boy and the pick-up artist will alert you to the fact that you're being played. The HF will not. But he will break your heart.

coming—women are genetically designed to become emotionally and romantically attached to a man who purports to understand their 'feelings'. *What went wrong?* you wonder. *He was so in tune with my feelings! He listened to me when I told him stuff . . . I thought he was different.*

No such luck. He was just a bad boy masquerading as a nice guy. A typical homme fatale.

Sadie, a writer from Jezebel.com, likens the homme fatale to Woody Allen, who, she reckons, 'built a career as an unlikely womaniser on the sensitive underdog persona'. She adds: 'The archetype used to be "secretly sensitive asshole"; now it's "nice guy with the heart of a

jerk". Although we're surrounded by the type, we're still not, on some level, prepared for him. And because this guy is as interested in an emotional conquest as a physical one, we're not trained to fend him off. Perhaps as a sexual conquest has become less taboo, a certain kind of man feels the need for another kind of challenge.'[8]

One woman told the *New York Observer* about her homme fatale experience: 'I was really an anxious mess with this guy,' she said. 'He'd email me and text me all day and then just fall off the face of the planet for three days. I am not an insecure person and I was terribly insecure. I was constantly checking texts and emails. I would be at home drinking whisky and smoking a cigarette in the corner, waiting for him to call. Finally, I was like, "I am thirty years old! What am I doing?"'

The taken man

This is the most dangerous guy of all—unless you know exactly what you're getting yourself into. He'll wine and dine you, tell you you're the most beautiful woman he's ever met and shower you with gifts. But all he's really doing is feeding his ego by garnering your attention. And not only are you missing out on meeting a man of your own due to the fact that you're cavorting with him but you're potentially the cause of someone else's break-up and heartbreak.

#39. GET RID OF THE TAKEN MAN PRONTO!

The taken man will never dump his current girlfriend or wife for you. And if he does, you can bet your Mac lip-gloss that he's going to turn around and do the same thing to you . . . STAY AWAY.

Stop fantasising about Candy Men!

If you're already ensconced in the Candy Man's dirty web, it can seem like there's no escaping. Thanks to his ingenious method of pushing and pulling you in so many directions that you don't know where your mind is, you're probably now at that point where your hormones are going crazy and you've become obsessed with a man simply because he saw you naked and then gave you the best orgasm of your life. And now you find yourself sitting at your office desk fantasising about your future life together for hours on end.

When a bloke projects sexy masculine energy, something inside the female brain snaps and we start picturing a future with him—at his family barbecue, naked in our shared bed, sitting on the couch together watching television. Some women find themselves concocting an entire relationship in their head, so when

he doesn't call they can't understand it. He's supposed to be their boyfriend! He's supposed to be having all these wonderful thoughts about them too! Newsflash ladies: he's not.

Remember Jane from 'A Cautionary Tale:1', who envisioned moving to LA for this man she'd only just met, where she saw herself in his apartment night after night, drinking expensive champagne then hopping in a limo to attend red-carpet premieres on his arm? An entire future life was playing out in her head and she'd slept with the guy once!

It's fine to fantasise what your life might be like with a man who actually calls you back when he says he will and asks you to move the relationship forward after months of dating, but after a few casual bonks without any sign of future commitment (remember—it's not his WORDS but his ACTIONS that mean the most), then the best way to cut out the heartbreak is to stop the fantasy.

#40. CANDY MAN WARNING:

Don't fantasise about the life you're going to have together. Live in the present! He's not your boyfriend . . . So don't let your mind wander . . .

If you're having difficulty switching off those fantasy images playing in your brain, try this exercise.

Call up your fantasy image and concentrate on it hard. Turn the picture into a black-and-white image, freeze frame it and then watch yourself step out of it. Put a thick black frame around it and glass over the front. Shatter the glass so the image shatters with it, then push it as far away from you as possible into the bottom right-hand corner of your vision. Watch it move further and further away. Then turn around and walk away. Repeat as many times as necessary for the fantasy to disappear.

A Cautionary Tale: Abigail

Henry Kissinger once said that power was the greatest aphrodisiac. But it seems that when this power is in the hands of a career woman, it can morph into a major turn-off. Abigail didn't exactly give a shit what men thought. She was an alpha female and she was sticking by it. As the creator and owner of an online dating business called luv-topia.com that she'd dreamed up, she's surmised that in order to survive in a man's world she'd need to toughen up and sex herself down. But today there was one thing on her mind as she walked into the lobby of the decadent Hawaiian hotel. She felt her chest tightening. This was it, she thought. This was going to be her honeymoon destination.

The excitement in the air was palpable as she strolled through the Four Seasons in Maui, gliding in her new beige and gold-flecked Christian Louboutin wedges that she'd bought especially for the occasion. She wanted to remember the moment when Lloyd agreed to a future together. After all, they already had been living together for over six months, and it wasn't like they were young any more.

'Babe, I've found it!' she squealed excitedly to Lloyd over the phone after the concierge left her alone by the poolside. She was standing at the exact spot where hopefully in a few months they'd be saying their vows against a backdrop of crashing waves and luminescent sand. She knew he'd agree when she

#41. ALPHA FEMALE WARNING:

AFs like to control every aspect of their lives. But remember, you can be an alpha in the boardroom, but you must be a beta in the bedroom, your relationship and around your man. Men don't respond sexually, lovingly or dotingly to a woman who tries to control and manipulate their every move. No matter how smart you think you might be. Save it for your corner office . . .

told him about the cascading waters, sunset views and that they had his favourite caramel creme dessert on the menu. Plus, they could make the entire wedding cake out of it!

'Married?' Lloyd almost spat the word. 'Are you out of your fucking mind? Surely you cannot be serious?'

Abigail could feel the rage building up inside of her. What did he mean he didn't want to get married? She tossed a lock of her curly red hair that had fallen in front of her thick black-rimmed Chanel specs and took a deep breath. She could hear the Playstation blaring in the background. Christ! He hadn't even bothered to turn the sound down, *she thought angrily. Asshole.*

Now she was standing in the lobby of the hotel feeling like the biggest fool on the planet.

'I just want to feel financially secure before I am responsible for someone else Abigail,' he coaxed, knowing how upset she would be.

#42. HIS EGO NEEDS TO BE COAXED NOT BULLIED:

NEVER under any circumstances, bully a man into getting married. It can only end badly and since men need to be in control of the rules of the relationship, his very masculinity, ego and sense of self will be destroyed if you do so.

Abigail knew he wasn't into the whole walking down the aisle thing; especially since the fact his parents had split when he was eleven, which meant they weren't exactly great role models for commitment. But her parents had been married for over thirty-five years and they still looked at each other like a bunch of loved-up teenagers.

Hence, she simply figured that if she acted as a devoted girlfriend, proved she could be the ideal wife, and nagged him every now and again by surreptitiously suggesting honeymoon locations (and visiting them so she could email him back the pictures), he would, at some point, give in and agree to give her the dream wedding she so rightly deserved. Now, at age thirty-five, she wasn't going to wait around any more. In fact she was mightily pissed off.

She'd been warned off men like this. Adult Peter Pans. Men who refused to grow up. She knew she was supposed to stay clear. Oh, and never, under any circumstances, buy them a Playstation. But Abigail had refused to listen, knowing how desperately Lloyd had wanted one, and so she had surprised

him with it for his birthday. And boy, did she regret it. Because her friends were right: it did spell the kiss of death to their sex life.

'I'm in fucking Hawaii, I came all the way here for you, and you can't even appreciate the fact that I'm trying to move our relationship forward? We're not kids any more Lloyd! It's time for you to grow some fucking balls.' She clicked the phone shut. If he wasn't going to marry her, she decided there and then that she'd find someone that bloody well would . . .

#43. CHASE TIP:

Men don't believe that they are to ever slot into a woman's 'grand plan'. They're not built to do it. So don't ever force your plan down their throat. Or you'll ruin The Chase for good.

5

The Ex Detox Diet

Friendship often ends in love; but love in friendship—never.

Charles Caleb Colton

You never really know a man until you've divorced him.

Zsa Zsa Gabor

Syndrome Ex

If you are one of those lucky ladies who is over her ex for good and has moved on without a worry in the world, then feel free to skip this chapter. And all power to you!

But if your ex (or a date, or your bonk buddy) pops up over and over again in your mind; if you find yourself grabbing your mobile phone after a few drinks and frantically typing in the words 'Wanna hook up?' at 3 am; if you tear up old photos of you both together only to piece them back together later on; if you constantly compare your new beau to him (especially in the bedroom) and are unable to push him out of your mind no matter how many blind dates, hook-ups and hallucinogens you've had, then you could be suffering from Syndrome Ex.

#44. NO SEX WITH THE EX!

No matter how good the sex was, after a break-up you should never return to the scene of the crime. While men will never say no to 'graveyard sex' (or any sex for that matter), it never ends. Expectations are muddled, emotions are confused and unfortunately as women, we're usually the ones who end up suffering.

Symptoms of Syndrome Ex

- Being unable to have a conversation with a friend without mentioning his name.
- Constantly analysing his behaviour in an attempt to decipher what went wrong.
- Spending hours thinking about him and what 'could have been'.
- Fantasising about the times you spent together.
- Tensing up whenever you go somewhere the two of you used to hang out and taking a peek to check if he's there.
- Driving by his place in the hope of *not* catching him in a passionate kiss with someone else (otherwise known as stalking).
- Constantly comparing any new date, lover, romantic interest to your ex and finding that no-one can ever live up to him.
- Wondering 'what if' you'd done things differently, looked different, acted differently or said different things.
- Finding yourself unable to get out of bed because you haven't heard from your ex.
- You're desperate to text/call/email him even though you know he's not going to respond or he's moved on.
- You have sex with other guys in an attempt to get over your ex, but always end up feeling worse than when you started.

- You have sex with your ex in an attempt to re-establish some sort of emotional connection, but quickly realise that it's a fruitless exercise that only leaves you feeling miserable.

The Ex Detox challenge

So you know you're a twat for still being addicted to the guy who caused you so much pain and heartache. Or the date who didn't call you back, and wasn't that special anyway, yet you can't seem to get him out of your mind. Or the guy you had a one-night stand with and never heard from again, yet you can't seem to shake off the urge to contact him. To kiss him again. To sleep with him just one more time in the hope that it will lead to something more. Well, the good news is: you're not alone. The questions I'm most often asked by readers are along the lines of: 'How do I get over my ex?', 'Should I stop sleeping with my ex since we're no longer dating?' and, worst of all, 'Should I quit stalking my ex on Facebook every day and simply move on?'

From all my research, I've come to the conclusion that the only feasible solution, as with all toxic addictions, is to embark on a course of drastic action: a strict Ex Detox Diet.

I know what you're thinking: *God, not another freaking detox that involves gooey green drinks, no alcohol and way too many cups of leek soup*. But the fact is that

talking to, thinking about or engaging in hot sex with an ex is so addictive that it can turn even the most unsuspecting victim into a junky worthy of a stint at a Promises rehab clinic.

Kristin Booker, a columnist on the website *Your Tango,* found her addiction to her ex was so overwhelming that her detox turned into a three-year-long effort comprising no men or sex whatsoever. That said, her addiction to bad boys was so extreme that she found herself dating a guy who hit her, then, immediately after, another guy who she caught having full-blown, forceful sex with another woman at a house party. No wonder something in her snapped: 'I had to take a break from dating to see exactly what in the world caused me to make these horrible choices,' she wrote. 'I decided to go cold turkey. No casual dating, no flirting, nothing. I needed to be clear to sort out the drama of my life. I was going into a dating detoxification, and I was going to come out clean and sober.'[9]

While most of us find a three-year detox a little extreme, everyone can manage my 30-day Ex Detox Diet. I encourage anyone who's obsessed with an ex to take the Ex Detox challenge and embark on this detox program. Don't put it off until tomorrow—or until you've called him back or met him for coffee or read his text. Start now!

The 30-day Ex Detox Challenge

Thirty days. That's all I'm asking of you. It's not much, but I guarantee that if you stick to the program, you will be successful in physically and emotionally removing your ex from your life. Plus, in the process you will nurture yourself and get yourself back into tiptop dating shape. You'll get your power back, girlfriend. And there's no leek soup involved—I promise.

I want to let you in on a little secret that the hundreds of people who have already tested the 30-day Ex Detox have discovered. It may not make sense right now, but once you're in the throes of the challenge, you'll get it. I'm talking about the fact that men (especially your ex) will develop a weird sixth sense when it comes to you no longer being obsessed with them. When you switch off that part of your brain that's obsessing over them, their sixth sense will immediately tap into the fact that you're over them, and they won't like it one bit.

As soon as you break those strong cords that bond you and your ex, he'll feel the snap. So he'll call, or text, or ask to see you. And the best news is that by then you'll be completely and utterly over him! The catch is that the sixth sense theory does not kick in until you are truly, 100 per cent genuinely, emotionally over him.

It's not a game. You can't play at this. You can't trick yourself into doing it. Or fool yourself into believing

it. You actually have to be over him, and only then will his chase to get you back begin. Of course, by that stage you'll be so completely over the cad and onto the next fabulous man that you'll want nothing to do with him.

So what are you waiting for? It's time to get to work! And every time you want to give up and go back to your old stalking and terrorist-texting ways, think about the sixth sense theory.

#45. THE SIXTH-SENSE THEORY:

He's never going to come back to you, and you're never going to get your power back until you're EMOTIONALLY over him.

Are you ready?

Ladies, to start the 30-day Ex Detox, you need to be committed to it. Are you? Are you a strong, capable, independent woman who is ready to push her noxious ex out of her life for good? Then sign this contract, put it on your fridge, or download it from my website for your screensaver, and let's get cracking!

THE 30-DAY EX DETOX CONTRACT

I, _____ the Single Female, do hereby agree to abstain from any contact with my toxic ex-boyfriend for 30 days.

1. The term 'ex' denotes anyone I've:
   - Slept with
   - Fallen in love with
   - Had a relationship with
   - Been on a date with
   - Been a booty call buddy with
   - Lived with.

2. Rules include:
   - No contact with the ex
   - No accepting booty call invitations
   - No stalking
   - No frequenting the places you know he might be
   - No feeling guilty about ignoring all his texts and calls.

3. I hereby acknowledge that failure to abide by these rules will result in me getting my heart broken again by the same person who did it once before, and that I will be prevented from meeting the man of my dreams.

4. I hereby agree that by signing this contract, I will begin my 30 days of no contact with my ex in order to remove him from my life once and for all and in so doing attract a decent, loyal, kind-hearted man who is worthy of my affection.

Signed,

_____

The Forlorn Singleton

Date: _____

The 30-day Ex Detox Program

Week 1

Day 1: Tell your friends

Pick up the phone or send a text message or an email to the close friends that you love and trust to tell them about your new 'diet'. Because there's nothing worse than the constant, 'So how's Jed/Paul/Samuel? Have you spoken to him yet? Has he replied to your texts? Is he dating someone else yet?' It's bad enough that he hasn't called you back, but now that you're attempting to detox yourself you can't afford the temptation to start thinking about him again. It's like your best friend dangling a box of chocolate cupcakes in front of your face when you're trying to lose a couple of kilos! From now on, all your girlfriends need to be fully aware that your ex is like Lord Voldemort from the Harry Potter series: your ex is now 'He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named'.

Day 2: Get your head around the rules

Just like a new diet where carbs are no longer on the menu (oh, the horror!), you'll need to change your mindset and get your head around the fact that your ex is no longer on the sexual, emotional or physical menu.

At least until the thirty days are up and the sting's gone out of the whole thing. The rules for the Ex Detox are all about cutting contact. That means no calling, texting, emailing, stalking his Facebook, stalking his new girlfriend's Facebook, thinking about him or talking about him for the next thirty days.

If he does call and beg to speak to you, or sends you a barrage of text messages, you politely tell him, 'I'd love to chat but I'm on work deadline/understaffed/extremely busy with a new project and I'll contact you once things slow down. Hope you're well.'

Even writing that now, I get a lump in my throat at the idea of telling someone I love/have loved to stop texting or calling me until I'm no longer 'too busy' to speak with him. But the truth is that receiving an ex's texts or hearing his voicemail messages can become an addiction. And while it's exhilarating, ego-boosting and makes you feel like a million dollars (for a nanosecond), the reality is that it's way too detrimental—not only to your emotions right now, but to any future relationship you might be deflecting because this ex is still in the picture. So buck up and do it!

From day two, there is to be no contact with your ex for the next thirty days. If you feel the urge to get in touch with him—as no doubt you will—write down what you intend to say to him so it's off your chest, then put it away in a drawer, send it to a girlfriend instead, or simply delete it off your computer. Under no circumstances are you to send it to him!

Day 3: Learn to schedule your Ex Thinking Time (ETT)

When thoughts about your ex pop into your head, put them away until later, until you've scheduled in some ETT. So, if today's Monday, then tell yourself you're not allowed to think about the ex till Wednesday at 5 pm. Most likely, when Wednesday rolls around you'll have forgotten all about the scheduled arrangement. This is good.

Now try extending that time to four days. Tell yourself that any thoughts about him that pop up have to wait until the weekend. Continue with this approach until you're in the habit of pushing thoughts about your ex out of your head the instant they appear, so they no longer infiltrate your mind and prevent you from concentrating on anything else.

Days 4–7: Start the process of physically deleting your ex from your world

This is the tough part, but it needs to be carried out stringently if you're going to get your ex out of your life for good. This means throwing out everything that reminds you of how things *were*. They are no longer that way. Nor will they ever be again. Let that thought sink into your mind over the next few days as you start the process of ex de-cluttering.

Of course, if you dated for more than a nanosecond, then everything in your life is going to act as a constant reminder of him. It could be that you bonked on every

piece of furniture in your apartment, or you're literally surrounded by photos, presents and his underwear. Not to mention the fact that he's constantly with you everywhere you go thanks to your beloved phone, which holds all his romantic texts, emails, tweets, Facebook updates and the most coveted piece of the entire puzzle: his contact number. *Yeouch*. This is where things can get difficult, so let's break it down:

- Delete his phone number AND all his text messages. If you just can't bring yourself to do this, then a temporary solution is to type them up on your computer, save the document with a password and put it away somewhere you won't see it every day. Out of sight means out of mind.
- Delete his email address and all the emails he's ever sent you. If you can't bear the thought of throwing them out for good, cut and paste them into a separate document and hide it away with the text messages file.
- Deleting him from your Facebook page means you'll no longer know that he's going out on dates, shagging his secretary or smiling in pics with leggy blondes. Yes, it's tough but oh-so-necessary. Stop following him on Twitter. Quit stalking his website. Delete him from your Myspace. And if you still can't help yourself, ask a techno-savvy mate to block those websites from your browser.
- Take down all photographs around your home

and box them up immediately. Remove pics of the two of you from your computer screensaver, your phone and your bedside table.

- Keep the Chanel handbag or the Tiffany bracelet for the day you're truly over him, but all other presents need to be given away or sold on eBay. Think of the profits as your detox reward!
- All those CDs or songs on your iPod that remind you of your ex—put them away in a box, delete them or save them for another time. You don't want them in temptation's way. Otherwise, you're guaranteed to end up listening to them when you come home drunk and then you'll be tempted to drunk-dial!
- Don't continue to live together for any reason whatsoever. Your new number-one priority is either him getting out or you getting out. Do everything in your power to make that happen. Student accommodation is always an option!
- No frantic dating! Your girlfriends, the gym and your beautician are going to become your social life for the next thirty days.
- Quit whining to your girlfriends about your ex. The more you talk about him, the more he's in your mind and the more you'll be tempted to call, text or stalk him on Facebook.
- No frequenting the places where you and your ex used to hang out together. In fact, stay away from any place where there's even the slightest possibility you might meet any man at all!

- Focus on your health. People have a tendency to resort to self-destructive behaviour when they're facing a difficult challenge. Hang out with people who are *good* influences, and do things that make you feel good the following day—not something that'll give you the hangover from hell.

Week 2: Days 8–14

Work on yourself—both inside and out

Get a journal. Journalling your thoughts is one of the most powerful things you can do. Instead of letting your mind constantly do somersaults, buy yourself a blank notebook and get cracking. Journalling will give your mind a little breathing space. It will also encourage you to think of other things—like work, having fun with your mates or even—gasp!—the prospect of meeting someone new.

- Start by writing down whatever's going on inside your head, even if it's just a stream of thoughts that continuously tell you how much you hate your ex, how much you blame yourself for being with him in the first place, or how much you miss him.
- Write your ex a letter containing everything that you want to say to him. Detail every thought, question, feeling or hurt, gratitude or confusion you might have. Put this letter away. Far away. He is never to see it.

- Add a daily 'gratitude page' to your journal where you list all the things in your life that you're thankful for. It can be the smallest thing, like waking up to sunshine and birds chirping; or getting a promotion or a new client at work. Start each day by saying 'I am grateful for . . .'
- Give yourself a daily mission where you set a goal that is achievable during that day. It can be anything from cleaning out your wardrobe to finally getting that zipper fixed, from paying a bill to learning a new language! Write down your achievement every night and remind yourself of your success every morning. Set yourself up with a positive mindset for the entire day.

Meditate. This important tool will be vital to your Ex Detox success. Hop onto iTunes or go to your local health food store and grab yourself a meditation or relaxation CD. Listen to it at night before you go to bed or whenever you're feeling scattered through the day. It will relax your body, clear your mind and help you to sleep better. You might even dream about things other than your ex. Now wouldn't that be nice?

Get sexy. This involves anything that increases your heart rate and makes you feel sexy, confident and better about being single. Some ideas include:

- Take up pole dancing.

- Get a personal trainer.
- Take up a sport—something you did during your teens that made you feel good, like jazz dance or softball.
- If you're not one to wear high heels, buy some! And if you are one to wear high heels, buy another pair. There's nothing better than a pair of heels to elevate your butt, thrust forward your hips and make you stand taller, prouder and sexier.

Week 3: Days 15–21

Your self-fulfilment plan—transform yourself into the person you want to be

This is your time to expand your horizons, nourish your soul, your mind and your body; to do whatever it is that puts a smile back on your face and makes you feel alive again. The first place to start is with exercise. The high that you get from working out is akin to the high you used to get from having sex with your ex (or even getting a text message from him). The body can do amazing things when you push it in a positive direction!

Find something that suits you, makes you feel fabulous and gets you out of the house. Enough moping about. Whip that butt into shape! Make it a regular thing—get a buddy if you don't have enough self-motivation—and start setting goals. Really push yourself. Think about beating your ex at whatever you're doing if that will make you sweat harder! Try these ideas:

- Yoga's good because it's both a mental and a physical workout. Grab a girlfriend, and go for your favourite soy chai lattes afterwards.
- Take up tennis or squash—sign up for lessons if you've never played before or you need a partner. You can always imagine the ball as your ex—works every time.
- Go jogging on the beach. Nothing beats fresh air and the sand between your toes. Plus, there are loads of cute guys doing the same every morning so you'll be reminded that your ex isn't the only fish in the sea. If you really love running, sign up for a marathon!
- Swimming will give you a complete mind-body connection. Get over to your local pool and dive in!

After a break-up, many people have a tendency to go for a drastic makeover. They dye their hair the opposite colour, get a tattoo or pierce a nostril. My advice is to wait until the thirty-day period is over before you do anything major. You're thinking irrationally, and may regret it later if you do anything too shocking. But there are some other, less drastic options:

- Get a facial, trim your hair or get it professionally blow-dried. Do something nurturing like getting a body massage or pedicure and manicure. A spray tan is my secret weapon—it instantly removes five

kilos from your frame. Who wouldn't feel better after that!

- Go shopping! People in the midst of getting over their ex have a tendency either to stay in the same outfit for the next three weeks—most likely, tracky daks and ugg boots—or decide that they need to show as much skin as possible in order to attract the opposite sex. Hence they start wearing midriff tops, miniskirts and thigh-high boots that would make even Carmen Electra look tame by comparison. Please don't go down either of these paths. Instead of entirely changing your usual look, go shopping for new accessories that will make getting dressed in the morning a fun activity. My favourite thing to do is to hit up Diva or Accessorize: they're cheap, trendy and will turn any outfit from drab to fab. Sexy lingerie underneath your clothing will make you feel great at any time of the day or night, while a new lip gloss or glossy foundation will give your face a lift. Visit your favourite make-up counter, get the salesperson to give you a mini-makeover, and update your routine.
- Talk and think high. Sit and stand up straight and don't mumble! If you have something to say, then say it. Try to stay away from negative words such as 'don't' or 'can't'; and don't be tempted into using terms like 'dickhead', 'asshole' or 'douchebag' to talk about your ex or the woman who stole him or who he's moved on with. Positive language will

keep you in a positive mind-space. Be the bigger person!

Week 4: Days 22–28

Come out of your shell

This is your week to go wild—literally. I want you to do something so extreme it's going to knock the wind out of you. Extensive studies have been carried out on what gives us pleasure, with extreme activities coming pretty much top of the pile after sex and chocolate.

Extreme sports. Since you want your bod to be in tiptop shape when you restart the dating process, extreme sports are going to be your best bet.

If skydiving isn't your thing, try parasailing, canoeing on the harbour, hiking in the forest or rock-climbing. This will build self-esteem, give you a sense of freedom and control, and rebalance your mind.

Extreme dating. Do something that's going to put a smile on your dial. I'm not talking about going on heavy blind dates where your entire future is riding on the fact that this is the last man on the planet. I'm talking about grabbing a gaggle of your single girlfriends and going speed-dating, wine-tasting dating (try www.fastimpressions.com.au), to a sporting match (yes, I consider this extreme dating), or even exercise-dating (check out www.fit2date.com.au). The aim isn't to meet a replacement man, but to have a laugh and

know that there are other people out there in your exact situation and nothing in this life is a hopeless scenario!

No more ex toxins! This is where you take the final steps to get rid of your ex. Stop talking about him for good, and if a friend asks about him, politely say that you've moved on. Stop making excuses for him. Be open to the fact that he probably isn't 'the one'. And stop fantasising once and for all about 'what might have been'!

Day 31 and after . . .

Just because the thirty days are over and you've completed the Ex Detox successfully, don't stop doing all the things that helped you reach your goal.

Continue to exercise for at least forty minutes per day. Every day. Even if it's just a gentle walk. You've got to get your blood moving and your endorphins flowing.

Don't quit your beauty upkeep. Continue to get a blow-dry or manicure regularly, or whatever else makes you feel beautiful. Don't underestimate the power of pampering yourself.

Confidence is key! Walk tall, tell yourself that you're beautiful and write your 'grateful page' in your journal every night. You won't believe the huge changes that come out of such simple things.

Your New Man Plan

Starting to realise that life without your ex might not be so bad after all? Think you might be ready to dip your toe back into the icy waters of singledom? If so, you need an appropriate 'plan of attack' to avoid things going horribly wrong yet again. No-one wants more heartbreak.

The New Man Plan isn't about going out to find a man right now. It's about coming up with a strategy on how to go about it. Of course, you may not be ready to even think about another man for a few more months, which is okay too. Just read the next few chapters, do some research, put together your strategy for when you are ready—and get set for a new era of your life!

Part 2

The New Man Plan

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A Cautionary Tale: Lulu

Lulu couldn't wait to see Chad again. It had been five nights since she'd been to his place and she was craving his rock-hard body against hers. Yet something didn't seem right. Where were the dates? Why had he frozen up when she'd asked if he wanted to meet for dinner? Why hadn't she been introduced to his mum? She was starting to suspect that something was amiss.

She sent him a text: 'What are we doing?'

'What do you mean?' he replied.

'Us—what are we doing?'

'We're friends that shag.'

Friends that shag? Is that all I am to him? *she wondered.*

'Been there, done that, wrote the manual and it doesn't work,' she replied angrily.

Argh. Another one bites the dust. What the hell is wrong with me? *Lulu wondered sadly.*

Lulu met up with Jane, Poppy and Abigail the following night for drinks at a bar. They were celebrating Poppy's return from Fiji. God, she looked good—all tanned and glossy and blonde. And Abigail was back from Hawaii doing God knows what. Something to do with scouting honeymoon destinations, which didn't exactly make sense, considering there was no sign of a ring on her finger.

As usual, when the girls got together, they got wasted.

'No more casual sex. I'm over it!' Jane slurred, holding

up her drink. 'Over being fucked and chucked by men who aren't even worth it in the first place. Over feeling like shit the next morning. Over getting obsessed with men who don't give a shit about me. Over it!'

#46. BOOTY CALL RULE:

Women tend to fall harder for their booty call buddy than the man does. So unless you're sure about what you're going into, you might want to skip being 'Friday-Night Girl' and let someone else wear that badge.

'Cheers to that!' Poppy said, swishing her caprioska around in its glass.

'Hey, you should try my dating website, luv-topia.com,' Abigail suggested.

The girls gave her a menacing stare.

'Seriously, do you know that 2000 people have found the love of their life through my site?' Abigail continued.

'Isn't internet dating for weirdos and serial killers?' Lulu giggled, taking a sip of her cocktail.

'Not any more. Just try it, Lulu—I'll give you free membership for a month. You won't regret it. Trust me.'

'Um . . . okay,' Lulu said. 'I guess things couldn't get any worse, right?'

'Cheers to that,' Jane slurred.

'You're going to need some coaching first,' Poppy told Lulu. 'I'm sorry to say it, babe, but you're fucking clueless when it comes to dating. No idea.'

'What do you mean?' Lulu asked.

'Well, firstly, you need to stop being so desperate. Men can smell it a mile away. Next, you need to stop thinking of every man as a potential husband or father to your kids. Ain't going to happen with that attitude.' After three cocktails, Poppy was really hitting her stride, not noticing the hurt look on Lulu's face. 'You need to act at all times like you actually have a boyfriend,' she continued. 'Like the last thing on your mind is committing to this man, let alone sleeping with him. Make him chase you. He needs to beg you for the privilege of your company, let alone your pussy.'

Lulu's hurt only lasted for a second. She knew the power Poppy had over men and the value of the advice that she was getting. None of her dating books had ever put it so bluntly. Thanks to all those new-age books, she'd always thought it was up to her to chase the guy, to let him know she was interested, to work for his attention. But Poppy was right. If she really wanted a boyfriend, she was going to have to completely change the way she presented herself.

Later in the evening, Lulu watched as two men competed to chat up Poppy. Poppy looked completely bored with both of them. But now Lulu understood what was going on: Poppy wasn't bored; she was making the men work for her interest. Making them get caught up in The Chase.

Later that night, Lulu sat in her apartment with a glass of wine in her hand amongst a sea of dating books. All the dating advice she'd garnered, all the psychobabble she'd tried to believe in, all the conflicting advice she'd attempted to

make sense of—it was all sprawled across the floor in front of her.

No wonder she'd been so confused. One minute she wasn't supposed to call him. The next she was meant to be proud to express her feelings. Then she picked up a book with pink-embossed lettering that looked like it had been drawn on with lipstick—she wasn't meant to have feelings at all because apparently men love bitches! She dropped the book to the floor with a thud.

#47. BAD DATING ADVICE:

Usually your intuition knows best. You know when a man is playing you for a fiddle. You know when you're in love (or lust, or whatever) with a man who isn't even worthy of the twenty-five cents it costs you to send him a text. You know when he isn't worthy of your thoughts, your cherry or your awesome personality. You know. You can't read it in a book (unless it's this one!) or listen to your girlfriends or attempt to emulate someone you saw on television. It's never going to work. Listen to your intuition, and chuck out those dating books!

She remembered how she'd behaved with Matt and the memory made her shudder. She hadn't ever heard from him again, which wasn't surprising after she'd thrown herself at him like that.

Men didn't need a come-on; they needed an opportunity to do the chasing. It never worked the other way around. Finally, she understood that. And she was about to do something she'd never have believed possible.

It was time to get rid of the 'self-help singleton' tag her friends had labelled her with for so long. Time to ditch all the dating books and start listening to her own intuition. No more living like a desperate Bridget Jones Clone, doing anything and everything to find a man—any man.

One by one, she photographed the books in her enormous collection, listed them on eBay, then carefully wrapped them in bubble-wrap and placed them into envelopes, ready to go. There were hundreds of them. How the hell had she collected so many and yet remained so clueless?

A few hours later, she checked her eBay page and noticed that the bids on her books were rising and rising.

Poor things, *she thought about all those women desperately hoping to find answers in those books when really the answers lay within.* They'll learn . . . soon enough.

6

Where are all the nice guys hiding?

Where are all the normal single men? Do they have special places that they go where single women are not allowed?

Lorrie, 34

By persistently remaining single a man converts himself into a permanent Public temptation.

Oscar Wilde

The low-GI man

If you're anything like Jane, Lulu, Abigail or Poppy, then you've gorged yourself on way too many Candy Men and now, hopefully, you're finally ready to get over the sugar high and start eating healthy. Brace yourself, ladies. Because this chapter is going to help you to meet the man of your dreams. He will materialise in ways you never thought possible. As long as you do exactly what I'm about to tell you.

First, let's identify the type of man you *deserve* to be with. Candy Men cloud your vision and take over your life, giving you a sugar high that's fabulous for the short time it lasts, sending your heart racing. But then the low hits and you just feel insecure and ill at ease. These are high-GI men. What you need to do is give up your bad-boy addiction and decide that enough's enough! And once you do, you'll find yourself starting to be open to the man you deserve to be with—the low-GI man. This guy may not give you the highs a Candy Man does, but you won't get the backflips and somersaults that lead to those terrible lows either. This guy is 'the keeper'. He's loyal, kind, calls when he says he will and treats you like a princess.

So, ladies, first step in your New Man Plan is to put into practice everything you learned in Chapter 2: you won't be sleeping with any man till you get to know him first and can ascertain whether he's high or low GI. Trust your instincts and you'll quickly realise

#48. HIGH-GI MEN WILL NEVER CHANGE:

So don't try! You are never going to be the special one in his life to turn him into a low-GI man. You are not going to be the one that he is going to settle down with. Instead of chasing him, feel sorry for the woman that gets duped into a long-term relationship with this guy. He is ALWAYS going to be looking over his shoulder.

the difference between high-quality, genuine men and those who are just in it for their own high and then move on to the next candy fix.

So how do you find this low-GI man? Read on!

Your ideal man list (IML)

Maybe you have loads of men flitting in and out of your life. Maybe you go on lots of dates but always come home disappointed. Or maybe you never go on dates because you believe that all it takes is to meet just *one* suitable man and that could happen anywhere at any time—there's no point forcing it. Whatever your approach, you need a plan.You need to write your very own ideal man list, your IML.

Now, I know what you're thinking. *Woohoo! I get to write a list that'll bring me my ultimate Prince Charming! He's got to be tall, dark, handsome, drive a Porsche and have abs*

like Matthew McConaughey! He's got to be super-attractive and we'll have amazing chemistry and he'll call me every day and buy me beautiful gifts!

Unfortunately, ladies, it doesn't quite work that way. Take the example of Charlotte York from *Sex and the City*. While the show is fittingly fantastical, the scenario proves a point. Charlotte is happily married to Harry, a balding Jewish lawyer with a flabby butt who speaks with his mouth full. He's the love of her life and she can't imagine being with anyone else. But rewind a few years and she was married to Trey, who checked every box on her IML. He was tall, dark, broodingly handsome, with old money and an Upper East Side apartment. But her Prince Charming turned out to be a dud in the sack. And their marriage turned out to be a dud too. No happy ending there. Hence she had to chuck out that IML and start all over again with entirely different criteria. Not lower, or 'settling'—just different. Low GI. Sustainable.

So what kinds of things should you include on your IML? Here's a sample list (written by my friend Belinda):

- Someone I miss
- Someone I want to sit close to on the couch
- Family values
- Mid to late thirties
- Real
- Strong

- Kind
- Caring
- Attentive to me
- Has goals and wants to share them and include a partner (me)
- Works—has a job/career
- Makes me happy
- Doesn't make me cry/worry
- We can have great sex with each other
- My best friend
- Supportive of me
- Wants to look after me
- Alpha male
- A sweetheart
- Has eyes only for me
- Loves me at my best and worst
- Wants commitment
- Loyal
- Kind
- Generous
- Trustworthy
- Does NOT flirt with everything in a miniskirt
- Makes me feel special when I'm around him
- Has good values
- Values me and everything I have to offer
- Thinks I am the best thing he's ever laid eyes on
- Not a playboy
- Good at communication, but not overly sensitive.

Your own list needs to be extremely personal. Don't be embarrassed to say what you want. Write everything down, then continue to add and delete things from the list. Make sure that you include both physical and psychological traits. Don't forget about values—shared values is an important aspect of a relationship.

Some people like to put their list in their Blackberry so they have it with them at all times. Others stick it on their bathroom mirror. Belinda put hers underneath her bed.

Whenever you read your list (which should be every night before you go to bed or every morning when you wake up) visualise your man. He needs to come to life inside your mind. You need to believe that he really and truly exists. Picture where you might meet this man: imagine possible scenarios of where he might hang out, then organise with your girlfriends to go there. Remove the 'fuck off' sign from your forehead and start responding to strangers. Try talking to at least one male stranger this week—practice makes perfect! Ask friends if they know anyone like your ideal man; join an internet dating site; go to swap meets and generally be proactive. Start saying yes to everything that you're invited to.

If, after a month has gone by, you are feeling disheartened, rip up your list. Watch the pieces flutter away and feel a sense of relief that you're not tied to a piece of paper. Then rewrite your list from

memory, adding things that suddenly seem important or removing things that you no longer value. Keep looking, and keep having faith—if you believe in him, he will come.

A few months after Belinda has written her IML, I emailed her to find out what happened. This was her reply:

Hey Sam,

I was thinking of emailing you the other day . . . I MET HIM!!!!!!!!

It took a little longer than two weeks, but was worth the wait.

He is everything on the list!!

I found that with the list I was more relaxed when I was out as I was clear about who to pay special attention to, and could relax when I knew 'my man' wasn't in the room. I found that eliminating the possibility that I may meet someone interesting that evening let me have an even better time while I was out. It was empowering!

He is so beautiful and truly genuine. I am indebted to you forever. Thank you so much.

Finally, here's another true story that's bound to encourage you to make your own IML.

I actually made a dream board and spent countless hours doing kinesiology work with my boss and friend

to make sure I was ready to receive my ideal man into my life. I spent two and a half years searching for him, and eventually figured out what I was looking for after some trial and error with a few other guys. He actually lives in Canada and was visiting Australia on a working-holiday visa last year!

Surprisingly, we met through a mutual friend and made an immediate connection with one another. We knew after two or three weeks that we loved each other and that we wanted to spend the rest of our lives together. It just fitted so perfectly.

I wanted to find someone who was in balance with me, who could accept me completely as I am, and who I felt not only physically and emotionally attracted to but spiritually connected with. Other than that, I wanted to be able to share everything with him, including my passions, my career and my interests, without judgment.

It was a cathartic and awesome process, and as a result I found the guy who is perfect for me from all the way across the world. —**Tess, 30**

Finding your ideal man

Single, eligible men don't hang out at Pilates classes, the nail salon or spray-tan booths. In fact, research has discovered that there's an untouched horde of single men sitting around in accounting firms! So, change

your routine, stop hunting in packs of women, smarten up and go where the men are. And remember: always have your 'game face' on.

Everyone has their own methodology for meeting someone of the opposite sex. Mark Philippoussis went on a reality TV show. Katherine Heigl married the gent she picked up after starring in his music video. And my beautician friend Karen tells me she met her match at a boxing match—he was the winner of the fight. Here are my top tips for meeting a man.

Herein lies the ultimate question: where exactly do you find a sensible, eligible, ringless date? It's a question I'm often asked by women desperate to meet someone—anyone—who fits their list of criteria; or is simply single, straight and not a serial killer.

If you have no idea where to begin your search, you're not alone. Even Oprah Winfrey's best friend, Gayle King, recently revealed she wasn't having much luck in the man department. She put it down to the simple fact that she had no idea where to start looking for him! 'There are plenty of men out there,' Oprah's range of dating experts encouraged Gayle. 'You just need to know where to find them.' Yet from the hundreds of women I've spoken to, it seems they're searching in the wrong places.

According to Dave Singleton, author of the book *Behind Every Great Woman Is A Fabulous Gay Man*, if we want to find a (straight) man, we need to follow the first rule of fishing: Go where the fish are. Makes sense

to me. I've seen dolled-up, confident women heading out in packs for girly cocktails in the hope of meeting the man of their dreams, only to find the bar filled with other prowling felines all batting their eyelashes at the one and only cute male in the room, who happens to be the bartender.

Ladies, it's time you headed out to straight-man-friendly environments.

#49. MAN TIP:

Men immediately compartmentalise women on the prowl in bars and clubs as someone they don't want to date. Branch out! Go to sporting matches, the gym, play tennis, learn French—go where the SOBER men are!

Stop whingeing and get off your couch

No-one ever met the love of their life by watching *Grey's Anatomy* re-runs alone on a Saturday night. When singles stand in corners whingeing about their situation and looking glum, it's unlikely an eligible man (as least, not one that's sober) is going to waltz up and ask to buy them a drink. Why? Because we're all attracted to people who smile, laugh and are confident in their own skin. So stand in the middle of the room, dance by yourself, look in control of your life (especially if you feel you're not) and I guarantee your luck will start to change.

Stop trawling bars

A crowded bar that stinks of spilt beer and too many cigarettes is likely to turn any man off before he's even set eyes on your little black dress and peep-toe heels. Besides, there are better ways to meet people that don't include drinking yourself into a stupor so that anything on two legs looks half decent. Make an effort to think outside the box. Take cooking lessons, go salsa dancing, take a course in something you're interested in, go to a bookstore—these are the places where you're going to find a likeminded and sober guy.

Get a sense of humour

I once dated a guy who I had to shake every so often in the hope of making him laugh. Ladies, be able to laugh at yourselves. I beg you, stop being so serious. Life is meant to be enjoyed, not to be frightened of. Take a quick glance at any poll about what the opposite sex finds most attractive, and I'll guarantee a sense of humour beats a tight butt every time.

Run. Dance. Swim. Whatever!

Speaking of a tight butt, working up a sweat induces endorphins. You feel good, you look good, your confidence increases and things spiral outwards from there. You don't have to spend hours at the gym (quite frankly, that gets rather boring) but thirty minutes a day will have you looking and feeling good. Plus there are plenty of hotties at the gym, down at the beach or at the local swimming pool.

Many singletons I've interviewed over the years have jettisoned the idea that you can meet someone at the gym. 'Too sweaty,' one sniffed. And 'there are no men in my yoga class!' lamented another. While I admit there may not be suitable gents doing the downward dog, why not try the other areas of the gym? The weights are a perfect place to scope out potential talent (I've met at least two dates there), while strutting your stuff on the treadmill is the ideal oppurtunity to scope out the talent. I've even had a friend meet her future beau while waiting in line to use the water cooler after a pump session!

Places to go

Sporting events

Ladies, as much as we enjoy hitting the town with girlfriends for giggles and granitas, there's no point in fishing in a fishless pond. Get tickets for the football instead, or learn how to play pool.

'Straight men hang out in a pool hall,' says Dave Singleton. 'After months of no dates, should you skip seeing the girly flick with your gal pal in favour of having beers and hanging out with hustlers, sharks and 8-balls? Of course.'

'I met Jim at a boxing match,' Karen exclaimed proudly when she showed me the rock on her finger. 'There were all these sweaty men there and hardly any women. It was the perfect pick-up joint for the single gal.'

Buying the milk

You may not like me for what I'm about to tell you but if there's one thing you should take from this book about meeting men, it's this: ALWAYS be prepared. You know that nightmare you have where you meet the man of your dreams when you're not wearing any make-up and are dressed in your frumpiest yoga gear or your well-worn tracky daks and food-stained ugg boots? Well, you don't want it to happen in real life. Always carry lip-gloss, a compact mirror, a hairbrush and breath mints in your handbag. That way, even if you're rushing up to the grocery store to get some milk, you're always prepared to meet someone.

Ask a friend

In the brilliant book *Around the World in 80 Dates*, author Jennifer Cox asked her friends around the world to set her up on a blind date with one of their single friends. While she didn't find the love of her life, she certainly met some very interesting characters. After all, you've got to be in it to win it.

Get a wingman

Never underestimate the power of a good wingman. Just make sure he isn't secretly in love with you and is trying to sabotage your game. Then again, if he is, and you're into him too, then your manhunting problem is solved!

#50. CHASE TIP:

While the aim is to get the man to chase you, you still don't want to be hanging in the corner being as boring as bat shit. Don't hide behind your glass of wine or your girlfriend's hair extensions. Don't be afraid to approach a guy. Even if you just say 'hi', the guy will do all the talking after that. Remember, men will do 90 per cent of The Chase work (because that's what he's born to do) . . . if you let him!

A Cautionary Tale: Lulu

'I like bigger girls,' John told Lulu, eyeing her hungrily as he cut into his steak and let the juices run out. NEXT.

'I must warn you, I'm a bit of a sex addict,' said Daniel the following night over Chinese. NEXT.

'I have to let you know, I'm actually married. But we're in the process of getting a divorce.' Hank actually made the quotation gesture with his hands when he said 'process'. As if that would soften the blow.

Lulu began to think that this internet dating thing might not be such a good idea after all. Why was it so bloody hard? Where were all the decent men? Should she just give up and accept the single life?

No. She had to force herself to go on another date. And maybe even another. Hell, she might have to date everyone on the entire website if that was what it was going to take. Besides, she was starting to get the hang of this dating thing—smile politely, be charming, don't talk about her ex, come across as though she had no baggage, ask loads of questions and act so nonchalantly the men could almost swear she actually had a boyfriend. Or just wasn't into marriage. She was actually getting follow-up phone calls! And so far not one of the men had asked her outright for sex.

She clicked on the website and scrolled through the profiles. She'd been super careful with hers: she'd password-protected her photo (which she'd had professionally shot by the way), put that she was after 'friendship' as opposed to casual sex and avoided

#51. KISSING FROGS:

When meandering through the Dating Jungle, you have to kiss (or at least have dinner with) a lot of frogs before you can ever find your prince. Don't expect it to happen overnight. But if you have your IDEAL MAN LIST firmly planted in the back of your mind, you know what you are looking for. And you're not going to settle for anything less.

any mention of marriage, kids or commitment. She was a new woman. And she was loving all the male attention.

As she scrolled through the message in her inbox—many of them picture requests—her phone beeped with a text. It was Chad.

'I think I made the biggest mistake letting you go,' he wrote. 'Please have dinner with me. I won't take no for an answer.'

She was about to reply, but then a sneaky smile crept

#52. INTERNET DATING:

Your profile is your weapon. Your advertising slogan. The way you project yourself to the world. Be sure to be super careful (and honest!) in everything you say, write and put out there. You can meet the man of your dreams online . . . as long as you play all your cards right.

across her face. He'd felt the sixth sense. He'd realised that she had emotionally cut all ties with him and gracefully (okay, so not so gracefully) exited his life stage left. And now he wanted her back. She pressed the delete button on her phone. God, that felt good, *she thought.*

#53. LETTING GO OF CANDY MEN:

When you are finally ready to let go of the toxic man (or men) in your life, you will be surprised at what is lingering just around the corner. Your high-GI man isn't the last guy on the planet . . . so don't treat him as one!

'It's working! I've realised the key to it all!' Lulu told Jane, Poppy and Abigail over brunch at a café a few days later. 'The way I project myself when I meet a man—it just makes me into game meat.'

Finally, everything was making sense.

'Men see me sitting in the bar with a neon sign on my forehead saying "I'm easy". And even though my head tells me I'm not one of those women, nine times out of ten that's the way it ends up. I'm getting totally fucked over by guys who are just out there to build up their "girls I've fucked" list.'

Lulu was saying what most women probably knew they were doing, but still couldn't stop themselves falling into the trap. Of becoming the 'bonk buddy'. Of having casual sex in the hope a relationship would develop from it. Of waiting for his texts. Of thinking he was going to come back to her. Of

disbelieving he'd left her for his ex-girlfriend, despite the fact he'd said he was into her.

'I go out and my eyes are peeled for any guy who catches my eye back, who gives me that look,' Lulu said. 'But you know what I've realised? Every guy will give me that look—because every guy is looking for that quick score! So of course, when I go out looking for him, all I find are these complete assholes!'

She lowered her voice. 'I'm forgetting about these guys—I'm actually DOING IT! I've started focusing on my own life. I'm taking up hip-hop dancing classes and I love it. I went skydiving. Skydiving! And now I'm on my way to getting my licence to jump on my own! I admit it was tough at first. All I could think about was whether I was missing out on meeting Mr Right. But after a while, I found the best joy in expanding my skills and knowledge and experiencing all life has to offer. And after nine dates on luv-topia.com and actually LIVING MY LIFE, I realised this is what it's all about.'

The girls applauded her.

'Proud of you babe,' Poppy said. 'Now, let's ditch this organic shit. Who's up for cocktails?' Poppy stabbed at her organic tofu slab for emphasis.

Lulu smiled. Single life wasn't actually too bad.

7

The man 'chase-me' plan

A man falls in love through his eyes,
a woman through her ears.

Woodrow Wyatt

Don't cry for a man who's left you, the next
one may fall for your smile.

Mae West

So, now you're a single girl again, and you're out on the prowl for the first time since you can remember and you've got no idea how to navigate the treacherous waters of dating. Well, don't fret just yet. I offer you my top five Single Girl Sex-Ed tips:

1. Change your look. Cut out hairstyles, outfits and make-up looks from magazines and keep them in a folder for reference purposes. You've probably got most of the staples in your wardrobe already; it's just about changing the way you wear them. Get edgier and sexier, without becoming sluttish or skimpy. A high-waisted skirt, a satin shirt and knee-high boots, plus some subtle highlights and a sharp haircut can do wonders for your self-esteem.

2. Get over your exes. I'm talking about *all* of them. Stop holding on to the one that broke your heart and cut him out of your life for good. Know that people come in and out of your life for good reasons: to teach you lessons and to help you grow. Accept the past for what it is and move forward. Staying stuck on your ex will not only hinder you from meeting someone else, but you'll run the risk of rebounding right back into his caddish arms.

3. 'Take me for lunch'. If a man you meet at a bar is licking his lips at the sight of your cleavage, take that as a sign he's interested. But when he asks you to go home with him, tell him this instead: 'Why don't you take me for lunch tomorrow?' If he recoils, he was only after one thing. If he agrees, you've got yourself a date!

4. Watch out for STDs. One in five: that's how many people in the world that carry a viral STD.[10] That's one whopping stat. Which means that when you're engaging in casual sex, you need to take EXTRA precautions. I'm sure you know by now that being on the Pill doesn't prevent you from catching an STD, so always, *always* use a condom. No matter how drunk you are.

5. Unwanted pregnancy. If something goes drastically wrong (and yes, condoms do fail around 2 per cent of the time), then you need to be prepared. Know where your nearest twenty-four-hour chemist is—and make sure you ask a friend to drive you there if you're intoxicated, or get a taxi—and ask for the Morning-After Pill. Note: beware of using this as a regular tactic. It wreaks havoc on your hormones and messes up your cycle.

Confidence equals sex appeal

The top turn-on for men is a confident woman who is comfortable in her own skin. Nothing beats it.

There's a woman I know—let's call her Jill—who has men fawning over her left, right and centre. She has short blonde hair and works as a psychologist, is quick-witted, smart and, above all, fun to be around. She's also slightly overweight and busty. Instead of hiding her figure under baggy clothing or wearing all-black ensembles that make her look as if she's

#54. CONFIDENCE AND DEPTH ARE KEY:

ALL the men I've interviewed say she doesn't have to be the HOTTEST woman in the room, but someone who has something more going on than the simple search for a man.

permanently on her way to a funeral, Jill's mantra is to embrace her curves. Whenever I see her out, Jill's wearing flattering girly dresses with a hint of cleavage that is never vulgar or over the top. Instead of being depressed over the fact that her abs don't resemble Miranda Kerr's or her legs are way shorter than a supermodel's, she projects her other, better features to the world. She doesn't overdo it with make-up, fake tan or false nails; she's simply well-groomed and *interesting* to talk to. She gives life a go.

Without being arrogant or up herself, Jilll exudes that one thing the entire male species finds more of a turn-on than anything else a woman could dish up in the bedroom or in the kitchen. And that is confidence. As a result, no man has ever turned Jill down on account of her weight. Or her height. Or the fact that she isn't the best-looking woman in the club. They don't give a toss. They're drawn to her energy, her pizzazz and her va va voom.

Not only is Jill not shy about talking to men but the atmosphere about her in a room makes men *want* to

approach her. She knows how to turn on the feminine charm, she knows how to flirt like a pro, and she knows the difference between slutty, sleazy and being a Wonder Woman—the one who keeps men wondering.

Men love the fact that she has a life of her own and they wonder how they might fit into it. Jill makes a point of doing crazy, wonderful things, of having colourful friends and enjoying the world for all it has to offer.

The reason I'm sharing Jill's story with you is to show how when we have self-confidence good things will follow. We all have limiting beliefs about ourselves—'When I lose five kilos I will meet a man'; 'When I get a new job I will meet a man'; 'If I had more money I would be able to afford a personal trainer and new outfits and a better hairstyle and then I'll meet a man'—but getting stuck on that merry-go-round of what ifs is boring. And no man is going to be attracted to that, ever, no matter how much cleavage you're sporting. The truth is, if you're hung up about the three kilos you need to lose off your butt, or if you're self-conscious about your skin, your hair, your boobs, whatever, men will sense it. If this rings true for you, then you need to get rid of those limiting beliefs right this minute. Start concocting your man plan today. Start living your life.

I'll say it again so it gets into your gorgeous head and stays there: confidence is the biggest turn-on. The greatest aphrodisiac. So get some.

#55. HOW TO OOZE AS MUCH CONFIDENCE AS A VICTORIA'S SECRET ANGEL:

I recently interviewed five of the hottest women in the world: the Victoria's Secret Angels. They're every man's fantasy and every woman's worst nightmare to be standing next to. They've been labelled freaks of nature for having ample cleavage, perfectly toned pins and not an ounce of cellulite on their perky butts. But, in the end, they're all just girls who've had to overcome insecurities of their own.

Marisa Miller, *Maxim* magazine's hottest woman of 2008, said that what turns her on in a man isn't looks or the size of his wallet, but 'confidence and someone being comfortable in their own skin'.

Heidi Klum mentioned that one of the reasons she is so happy to diet and exercise like a raging lunatic is to impress her husband, Seal, who by the way, has serious facial scars as a result of discoid lupus, which, additionally, caused some hair loss. Not that she gives a toss.

Weapons of mass seduction

These can be classified as anything that makes a man notice you before you've noticed him. Or anything that

makes you feel like you're the sexiest woman in the room. If you believe it, then you are!

Anything red

According to my life-coach friend Alina Berdichevsky, 'Men are attracted to red because it's the power of sex! Unconsciously, it reminds them of the blood flow to erogenous zones associated with arousal. However, that can be quite masculine at a subconscious level as it screams action! The colours that men perceive subliminally as feminine are black (depth and mystery); white (light and purity); pink (love and softness).'

Subtle cleavage

And I do mean SUBTLE. Showing a bit of cleavage will make you feel feminine and gorgeous, and is guaranteed to get a man's attention immediately. There are no two ways about it. Women often say they don't want to have to bare their tits to snag a man, but that's not what I'm saying at all. I'm merely putting it out there that cleavage can make YOU feel more sexy, liberated and confident—if it's done correctly. If you're self-conscious about your flat chest, there's an ingenious new invention known as 'cleavage cupcakes' or 'chicken fillets' that can increase your bra size within seconds!

#56. MAN TIP: DON'T HAVE IT ALL HANGING OUT

Dress like a slut and they'll treat you like an appetizer. Leave something to the imagination and keep them wondering what's underneath.

Spray to play

Smell good! Experts claim that men are attracted to women who smell of cinnamon and vanilla, while a liquorice scent gets the female pheromones going at full speed. You might want to do a little baking before you head out the door for a big night out—just don't spill any flour on your new frock. Two sprays of scent on your pulse points is enough . . . *don't overdo it!*

High heels

I know they're uncomfortable as hell, give us bunions, sore arches and blisters on our heels, but high heels also do something no diet is able to do: they elevate your butt, slim your waist and make your legs look inches longer.

A winning smile

Nothing beats a friendly smile, so wear one at all times!

From the Male Room

'Hard to go past a really, really great scent. Not one that overpowers, rather one that invites people to linger. My wife wears J'Adore. It's a dangerous scent. A lady where I buy my lunch recently wore J'Adore. She stopped me dead in my tracks. Ahhh, J'Adore.'—**Tim**

'A bit of modesty goes a long way. You don't need to show off tattoos and you don't need to wear very little to emphasise curves. All you have to do is wear it well.'—**Michael**

'Scent gets me every time. All you women out there still wearing Red Door are doing yourselves a disservice—ditch it. If you want a classic, go for Dune by Christian Dior or Versace Crystal Noir. For the younger, go the Versace Woman. I can tell each of these apart and can find any woman wearing any of them in a club from the other side of the room—drives me wild. Wearing these distinct scents also helps us fellers with a conversation starter.'—**Martial**

'My favourite is the fragrance Narcisco Rodriguez—the scent is enchanting and will leave you spellbound. When a women passes me on the street and she is wearing it, I go ga ga.'—**LG**

'A woman in high heels who knows how to walk properly in them. A hint of stocking tops on a

suit-attired woman is enough to make my knees go.'—**Dean**

'Girls who know how to accessorise! At one point recently it was fashion belts to accentuate supple hips; the thing lately seems to be girly headbands. If you can pull it off, it's hot. Trashy knee-high ugg boots with denim minis are guaranteed melters for me as well. As much as people bemoan the fashion industry, they know what we want. Keep it coming.'—**GAE**

Give good conversation

Men aren't averse to interesting banter and witty conversation. Just pick topics other than your sorry single life. Being able to talk easily to men is really just a matter of putting together a few clever, original opening lines and then being willing to go out there and put them into practice.

Recently, while I was in LA shooting my television show, *The S-Word*, I decided to get some tips from Neil Strauss, author of *The Game*, and supposedly the world's number-one pick-up artist, on how to talk to a man.

Although I've read all Neil's books, I'd never seen a picture of him and so didn't have a clue what he was going to look like. The man who greeted me inside his LA mansion was short, completely bald and was wearing dagger earrings in both ears. Certainly not what I was expecting. But when he took me out that night to show me his pick-up skills in action, I was blown away.

Our first stop was The Standard. We sat down with vodkas and sodas and his pick-up game began.

'So are you two sisters?' he asked two Indian girls who sat down on the couch adjacent to us. He wasn't the least bit intimidated by the fact that they were accompanied by two men. Nor the fact that he had just spouted a line directly from his book. I listened intensely to all his advice and watched him closely.

When I returned to Sydney, I told my friend Carmen about my newfound pick-up artistry skills.

We decided to try them it out in the field.

Field report: 24 December 2008

Outfit: thigh-hugging minidress in crimson red
Cleavage: check
High heels: YSL platforms
Make-up: subtle yet sexy
Hair: tousled, 'just fucked' look
Associates: Hot girlfriend, Carmen
Mission: to meet men

Carmen and I walked into the pub like we owned the joint. It was us against the world. We headed over to the bar to order ourselves some drinks: peach bellinis all round.

The two guys next to us were paying for a couple of weird mahogany-coloured shots.

'What *is* that?' I asked them.

'It's a jagerbomb and orange juice,' answered the cute one standing next to me.

'Jagerbombs?' I said with a frown. 'What . . . are you guys like twelve?'

'Oooh . . . this one's feisty,' the cute guy said to his friend as he flashed me a cheeky grin. 'Hey, what's wrong with jagerbombs? They're really cool and get you drunk super fast. Hey, you're funny, we should meet up later on. I'll come and find you.'

'You do that,' I said. Carmen laughed.

#57. MAN TIP: ASKING A MAN A QUESTION IS THE BEST OPENING LINE

If you ask him his opinion on something, it not only flatters his ego, but he immediately puts you in the non-desperate female category. Bingo! You're immediately in!

After we strategically placed ourselves in the centre of the room, we started to giggle over something someone across the pub was wearing. A group of guys turned to look at us and I noticed one who looked exactly like Jude Law. Here was my chance. I'd learnt from Neil that I had to act quickly. Waiting around to say a line suddenly begins to look creepy, not cool.

'Sorry about being loud, but we're just complaining because my friend went on a date the other night and the bill came to $150 and the guy made her pay! What do you think of that?' I asked.

Jude came over. 'I think, good on him!' he said, laughing. 'Actually no, it's pretty bad. But tell me more—what happened?'

Bingo. I started to explain how Carmen had given the guy a second chance, but then he sent her a bill for half the cost of the romantic weekend they went away on together. (True story!)

'Now that's just lame,' chimed in the cute guy's friend, who'd also come over. He sat down next to Carmen and they began to chat, while I struck up a conversation with Jude. After a while, I took a step back and surveyed my work. Carmen and Jude's friend were kissing. Mission accomplished.

Then I spotted him: *my ex*. Suddenly I lost a grip on my handbag and its entire contents poured out onto the floor of the bar—my MAC pressed powder cracked into a thousand pieces. As I bent down to pick up my iPhone and hairbrush, I bumped heads with an incredibly tall, good-looking man. Not my ex.

'You dropped this,' he said in an incredibly cute accent, handing me my blush brush.

'Thank you.' My cheeks turned the exact shade of my Nars Orgasm blush.

'You should be more careful,' he said, grinning like an idiot.

I smiled back. 'Why? Then we wouldn't have run into each other like this.'

Pick-up lines that work

- 'Can we ask you guys your opinion on something? My girlfriend just went on a date and the guy refused to pay any of the bill. So she put the money on the table, went out the back and called a friend to pick her up! Should she give this guy another chance?'
- 'Hey, nice jacket. I've got to get my brother a birthday present—can you tell me where you got it? Do you have any other suggestions?'
- 'What are you drinking? Looks good.'
- (To a group of guys) 'Hey, my friend here just took a bet with me to find out which of you guys are single . . .'
- 'Have you guys read that pick-up book *The Game*? Because I think someone just tried one of those lines on me, but I can't be sure because I haven't actually read it!'

How to tell if he's into you

So you've met someone—hooray! But is he really into you? Or is he only after one thing? Gauging his interest can be one tricky feat. Experts reckon the key to telling whether a person is interested in you is to look at their shoes.

Anthropologist David Givens, author of *Love Signals: A Practical Field Guide to the Body Language of Courtship*, says the 'toes-turned-in posture occurs when someone

feels both smitten and somewhat intimidated by you.' That's right, ladies, if a man has the hots for you, he'll subconsciously point his feet towards yours.

By Givens's reckoning, sexual signals in the form of body language are nothing new. 'For all of our technological advances and psychological insights, when it comes to the silent signs of sexual attraction, we are no different than beasts,' he writes. 'For the past 500 million years, every member of the animal kingdom has utilized certain signals to communicate their interest in mating. These boil down to the message: "I am harmless; I won't bite."'[11]

According to Britain's Social Issues Research Centre, a whopping 93 per cent of our communication is actually through our gestures.[12] In other words, you shouldn't listen to a darn word he's saying. Instead watch for these signs:

Signs he likes what he sees

- The eyebrow flash. 'When we first see someone we're attracted to, our eyebrows rise and fall,' says dating expert Tracey Cox, who considers the move a crucial telltale sign of interest.
- If he likes what he sees, he'll stare intensely at your eyes, the size of his own pupils will increase, and he'll blink a lot.
- He'll stare at your mouth.
- He'll fix his tie, pull up his socks or jut out his chest.

- Want to tell if he's lying? Number-one red flag is face touching. When Bill Clinton was questioned over the Monica Lewinsky scandal, he declared he didn't do it, then immediately reached up and touched his nose. Sprung! It's not only Bill who proves this point; there's loads of scientific research to back up the theory. Apparently when people cover their mouths it's a sign they're uncomfortable about what they're saying. Other signs include ears turning red, shifting their eye contact, turning their body slightly, sweating, excessive hand movements and chewing the inside of the mouth.

#58. CHASE TIP:

If a man asks for your number without attempting to get you back to his place . . . you know he's interested in more than just a one-night stand.

The great number swap

Once you've got talking, enjoyed an evening of witty banter and both seem keen to do it again, who should ask for whose number? I've noticed a whole lot of hoo-ha and confusion over the number swap. Do you take his number? Or does he get yours? Who is expected to call first?

My opinion is that according to the normal progression of The Chase, if he wants to see you again, he'll ask for your phone number and actually put it to good use. So don't stress about whether or not you should offer your number, or ask for his. If he wants you, he'll find you somehow.

However, if you're in the situation where you have the number of a man you're really into but who hasn't yet called you, you can try this little text trick. Text him something sexy but pretend it was for another guy. Something like: 'Hey J, had a great night last night too, catch up soon!'

The guy you're really trying to get hold of might text back something like: 'I think you have the wrong number. Who is this?'

And then you write back: 'Oh, sorry, it's Jane. Who's this?'

Naturally he'll be intrigued because men love competition, and then he'll want to start to fight for you. Problem solved! Now he has your number—all he has to do is use it. And if he doesn't . . . well, I bet you know the answer to that one by now.

From the Male Room

'Women are hopeless with numbers. So if she's a girl I really, really like, then I'll refuse to take her number and give her mine instead. If she calls, I know she's the one for me. I need a woman who

doesn't live in fear and goes for what she wants. If I get the sense she isn't that personality type, then I'll always swap—but only so it feels democratic. We both know it's more about me getting her number and I always expect that I'll be the one to call if I want to.'—**Gary**

'Don't worry about who takes the number down. Women never call, they want to be called.'—**Glenn**

'If a woman calls a man, we think it's smoking hot. It says that she's not afraid to ask for what she wants and she doesn't subscribe to what she's "supposed" to do.'—**Jet**

'I usually take a woman's number because it gives me the choice of calling her or not.'—**Lance**

'It's not the call that ruins The Chase, it's the content of that call that either ruins The Chase or perpetuates it. If there is no call it has more chance of ruining The Chase. These days a lot of guys lose interest if there's no call and will just move on to another challenge. With this so-called man drought guys have it too easy these days. Just because a girl calls doesn't mean that she's yours. It's still just part of The Chase.'—**Tanc**

How to ask him out without him knowing

Sometimes (okay, often) men have trouble spitting out the words 'Want to go on a date tonight?' If you want to move things along, the best way to do so is by cleverly suggesting a pseudo-date. Ask him along to some fabulous event that you and your friends are going to anyway. 'I'm going to this awesome party tomorrow night,' you tell him. 'You should come—invite your friend along too.' This way there's no date, he's not coming alone, and you're not waiting all night for him to rock up because you're too busy with your mates to actually give a toss. If he arrives, bonus! If not, you've had a great time.

The key here is not to tell your friends the entire story. If you do, they'll be asking you every minute whether or not he's coming, is that him walking in the door, and so on. Just keep your mouth shut about it and have the view that if he comes, then great. And if he doesn't, then it's his loss because you had a great night anyway.

Another approach is to ask him what he's doing on the weekend and then tell him that, miraculously, you're doing that exact same thing and that maybe you'll see him there. I once tried this out on a guy and it worked wonders. I made sure, however, that I brought along plenty of girlfriends and we made a night of it, rather than it being lonely old me turning up and chasing the

man in question. And yes, we ended up dating. After a few months, when I casually asked him if he thought it was odd that I showed up at the exact same party he was at, he replied, 'No, I didn't think it was weird at all. It was a well-known event—there were heaps of people there. It was great that you were there too.'

From the Male Room

'I don't think it's odd at all for a girl to ask a guy out. I realise that generally it falls on the guys to do the asking, but it never occurred to me until recently that it could be taken as strange or surprising if a girl goes ahead and asks. Why should it be so unusual for girls to take initiative from time to time? I know it's incumbent on the guys to do the approaching but it's almost always the girl who decides if something will happen, and sometimes her mind is made up before the guy even knows.'—**Ashok**

'Women asking men out? There's a better chance of winning lotto. I'm all for it, but have only come across one woman who was confident enough to do it. The rest, they seem to like being chased, and the power/position that comes with it.'—**Peter**

#59. YOU ARE PRIORITY #1, NOT A MAN!

When you start focusing on growing yourself as a person, you will be surprised at what you start to attract into your life. How you project yourself to the world will take on a colossal shift that you never thought possible. Become the Wonder Woman, the ideal girl that men would love to date. And The Chase will be flipped faster than you can wonder why he hasn't texted you . . . because probably many men already have . . .

Sex and the single mum

A quick word to single mums: don't despair. Believe it or not, these days you're hot property. Gone are the days when single mums were portrayed as sad, desperate and destined to stay alone. Now they come with established careers, financial and emotional independence and—bonus—are in no rush to get married.The idea that women with kids are second-hand goods no longer applies; and let's not forget the appeal of all that sexual experience!

While Hollywood's single mums have no shortage of men to date (Ashton Kutcher rushed to embrace Demi Moore's three kids as his own, while Brad Pitt adopted both of Angelina Jolie's), let's not forget that for the rest of the world, being a hot date when there

are bills to pay, washing to unload and babies to feed is often no easy feat.

J, a 41-year-old mum and regular blogger, says her toughest challenge is trying to juggle a new relationship with her sixteen-year-old daughter. Plus there's the added pressure of choosing a man without a hidden agenda. 'At my age, I'm much more aware of the game,' she says. 'The men of my age seem to fit into the categories of serial players that have suddenly realised they are ageing and want to grab on to anything that looks halfway decent, or they have been battered and bruised in a marriage break-up, and are trying to get back at their ex-wives!'

Sex after forty: Because you're worth it!

Dumpees, divorcees and older singletons who find yourselves dating again, there's good news up ahead. There are now more ways for you to meet, mingle and get rehitched than botoxed faces on *Desperate Housewives*.

'Dating again' is a topic that's hotly debated in my column by a whole range of readers, from single mums to jaded ex-wives and long-time lovers who have been tossed out onto the street without warning. All agree on one thing: dating again after a long-term relationship is damn tough, especially when you've got a flock of kids, a load of baggage and more skeletons in your closet than Colin Farrell does.

'How in the world do I get back into the dating game when I don't even know the rules any more?' laments Kylie. 'I've been married to the same man for a decade and suddenly I'm back on the singles scene. What's a gal to do?'

Fear not, Kylie, because get this: *Tatler* magazine reports that divorcees have never been so hot. 'Gone are the days when divorced women were viewed as social pariahs . . . They have turned the tables on the stereotype of the pinched, lonely woman desperate to get remarried; they have proved that single life can be even more exciting second time around.'[13] Hooray! And *Tatler*'s secret to post-divorce dating? 'Get back into the saddle as quickly as possible.' Think Elle Macpherson striding along in her leathers, Brad Pitt jet-setting around the globe with rainbow family in tow, and Jessica Simpson roller-skating in hot shorts and a bikini top on the set of her latest music video. Grrr.

When my author friend Bronwyn Marquardt found herself back in the singles boat after ten years of marriage, she refused to allow herself to wallow in it. 'Instead, I put the emphasis on getting back out there and meeting people—women as well as men, people from different walks of life. I took invitations that I normally wouldn't take, and went to parties/functions alone. I had some great adventures and did meet some people that way. Including men.'

Still, with the dating rules shifting faster than Shane Warne's romp buddies, when you've been out of the

loop for years (even decades), it's kind of hard to keep up. Questions that often come up are: Who initiates contact? When does sex come into it? Is marriage still on the cards a second (or third) time around? And where do you meet all these 'dating again' singles anyway?

Well, that's where the internet comes in. There's been an explosion of new-fangled dating services designed with the 'dating again' patron in mind. For those of you who aren't afraid to log on for love—and how many time-poor, workaholic, shy singles are there who won't welcome the chance to let their fingers do the talking?—try www.i-dont.com.au, a new dating site that's getting 'dating again' singles into a each other's inboxes.

And don't be shy. Even newly single Hollywood starlet Uma Thurman has decided internet dating is the way to go.

A Cautionary Tale: Jane

As Jane left work for the day—she now worked at a television studio in Los Angeles—she realised that all her girlfriends were now single. And then she thought about the Producer. She hadn't heard from him in months yet knowing that she'd been one of many women to fall for his tricks still made her feel queasy. But she wouldn't allow herself to get back into that funk. Not again. Ever. Or so she thought.

A cold breeze blew against the back of her neck as she made her way down to Sprinkles Cupcakes, her favourite shop in the entire city. She bought herself a cinnamon sugar cupcake and took a slow bite, allowing the warm, velvety taste to slowly melt onto her tongue. She wanted to savour every last bit and the feeling she got from the cupcake was the same high she felt whenever she'd received a text from the Producer.

#60. YOU'RE A TEXT-ADDICT:

When you are continually and desperately waiting and hankering after that next text from a man, it's not them you're attracted to, it's the addiction and the sugar rush you get from the tiny little envelope popping up in your phone. Don't mistake it for love. It's nothing but infatuation.

Since the Producer had stopped contacting her, Jane needed to get her sugar fix from somewhere else. Cupcakes were the next best thing.

'Couldn't wait till you were outside the shop, eh?' A man's deep voice interrupted her thoughts.

Jane turned and came face to face with a tall, broad-shouldered, youngish-looking man with tousled brown hair and sparkling green eyes. She instantly recognised him. Duncan, her high-school sweetheart. Her first kiss (behind the gym—clichéd, she knew). Her very first boyfriend, who had given her a single red rose, and who she'd dumped at the bus stop after deciding she wanted to focus on her exams rather than on dating.

'Oh my God, Duncan! You look amazing!'

'Right back at ya, Janey.'

She felt a tingle in her spine.

'How good are these cupcakes, huh?' she asked.

Duncan pointed at his teeth and pulled a grimace. 'Er . . . you've got some . . .'

'Oh!' Jane put her hand in front of her mouth and ran her tongue along her teeth. She could feel the bits of cupcake wedged between her front teeth. 'How embarrassing!'

'Rough day at work, huh?'

'Oh, you have no idea.' Jane smiled.

Duncan offered her a bit of his chocolate marshmallow cupcake. She couldn't resist.

'I love a girl who likes her chocolate,' he said conspiratorially. 'Diets are so last season.'

Jane giggled.

'So, I hear you're a hot-shot reporter now, Janey? Always knew you'd make it big time,' he said, smiling.

'It's no big deal. Just like any job, I guess. Although I do get to meet cool people. What about you? What's your story?'

And hold on, what the hell are you doing in LA? And at my cupcake store? *she thought.*

'Well, I've actually moved. I'm now living between New York and London, stopping off here for a few days. I'm actually stalking you. I knew you worked around here. I read about you in the school graduate newsletter.' Duncan winked.

God, he looked cute when he talked, *Jane thought.*

'Let me guess . . . are you a pilot?' Jane asked, dismissing his comment, although she couldn't help but wonder if it might be true. She kind of hoped it was.

'Ha. Nothing as exciting as that. Hedge Fund manager. Pretty dry actually. But hey, it pays the bills.'

'Wow!' Jane replied, hoping she didn't sound too interested. God, he was cute. And tanned. And sexy. 'I always knew you'd do something awesome and businessy,' she said, remembering his prowess in maths. He'd always helped her out with equations; maths was never her strong point.

He laughed. 'Speaking of calories, I was just about to head off to lunch at The Ivy. You should join me.'

Ooh, The Ivy. Now she'd have to go! What could be the harm anyway? She hadn't been out alone with a man since that awful experience with the Producer. Yes, she would go. Duncan was familiar, and definitely cuter than she'd remembered, even if it was in an accountant sort of way.

After a delectable lunch of crispy crab cakes, spinach linguine, too many wines for a Monday afternoon and scintillating conversation, Jane agreed to go on a second 'date' with Duncan. And then a third.

Before she knew it, they were a couple. Without any drama! He was normal. And stable. He didn't have a gaggle of women on speed dial, and he called her when he said he would. She had a boyfriend. A real live, kind, doting man who was everything she wanted. She was hopelessly and romantically in love. For real this time. She almost forgot about the Producer. Almost . . .

8

Modern dating

Dating is one of two things. Either it's about trying to get to the next level or it's about trying to get laid.

Janice Dickinson, author of *Check, Please! Dating, Mating and Extricating*

Some people are settling down, some people are settling and some people refuse to settle for anything less than butterflies.

Sex and the City

The first date

So you've ditched the whole casual sex notion and put yourself into potential girlfriend material category. Which means, ladies, that you have found yourself with an invitation for a real first date! Woohoo! But where do you go from here? How do you act?

The other night I was with a girlfriend who asked me these exact questions. We were sitting over dinner and wine after we'd attended a red-carpet event. She looked absolutely stunning—relaxed, demure and classy. She was talking in a soft voice, asking lots of questions and listening intently to what I had to say in response. She wasn't nervous or putting on an act, or desperately wondering if I'd be the perfect person to parent her future offspring. Thank goodness. But she was acting EXACTLY how she needed to act on her date the following evening. So I took out my digital camera, took a photo and placed it in her hand.

'*This* is how you need to act on the date,' I told her.

She glanced at the photo and saw how at ease she looked and something clicked inside her head. It was her 'aha' dating moment.

'But what if I don't have anything to talk about?' she said.

'Did you worry you'd have nothing to talk about with me?' I asked her.

'Well, no, we're just having a normal conversation.'

'Well, think about what normal conversation entails and bring that to the table. Give him a turn at taking the lead too. Trust me, guys have plenty to say.'

#61. WONDER WOMAN TIP:

Never talk about your ex on the first date! For some reason men abhor this more than if you talk about your wedding plans and the perfect white dress.

From the Male Room

'I love first dates. If it's awkward it's not right. End it as quickly as possible. What I like to do is invite someone along to something that I want to do anyway. For example, I want to go and hit some golf balls at the driving range and then go to dinner . . . would you like to join me? I want to see this film at Gold Class . . . would you like to have a cheeky chardonnay and watch it with me?'—**Ari Gold**

'The first date is exciting and I enjoy it. The only tricky thing is working out if and when that first kiss should happen. But I kind of like that too. I like planning a great night out, so she feels special.'—**Been There, Done That**

'A successful date is an oxymoron. Once mutual interest has been verbalised, it evaporates. It's the equivalent of trying to play poker when everyone knows your hand. A guy always has to keep the woman guessing as to his feelings about her. Once she knows, he's either just horny and desperate or boring. So for me, I have no first dates, no expectations, I simply hang out and keep it natural. I do things that are either free or really cheap and keep it on neutral territory so that the woman feels totally comfortable and unobliged. I also tell her absolutely nothing about my plans, only that I've taken care of all the decisions and that she's going to enjoy the surprise.'—**Gary**

Ten things he notices about you on the date

These days, a first date can feel more like a gruelling job interview for a role you're not even sure you want to apply for in the first place. Still, there are a few obvious turn-offs that you want to avoid at all costs. So if you really want to get that follow-up phone call, it may be time to pull up your dating socks.

1. Dress for yourself

Men are visual creatures; they judge with their eyes. (Women judge with their ears, although shoes are

crucial too—*his* shoes. But that's a whole different book, written by my friend Donna Sozio and titled *Never Trust a Man in Alligator Loafers*. If you look like a meal on a platter about to be served up to him—that is, showing too much leg, cleavage, too much make-up and not enough class—he's immediately going to put you into the 'trying too hard to impress me' category. There's no challenge. It's boring. He's moving on.

Instead of the skimpy outfit, dress like you would if you were going out on the town with your girlfriends. You're not trying to woo them—you're trying to look sexy for yourself. Follow the same mantra here and view the date as a chance for *you* to size *him* up.

2. Hide your intentions

Before you even sit down to a glass of champagne together, he's wondering whether you're sizing him up as future husband material. And listen up: if you are, he's going to smell your desperation from a mile away. He'll pick on the way you're flirting heavily with him, or bringing up topics that make you seem like the perfect wife, or asking questions to suss out his views on parenting. And don't be surprised if he makes a quick exit out the back door.

Settle down. Relax. Take a deep breath in and think of yourself as the ultimate CoverGirl—'easy, breezy and beautiful'.

3. Don't rehearse

'There's nothing worse than a woman with a seemingly rehearsed list of questions to ask on the date. Women who can just go with the spontaneous flow of things are the best dates,' says one gent. While I usually like to have around three interesting questions or topics to talk about in the back of my mind, after one or two questions the conversation should flow spontaneously. No longwinded stories necessary. Save those for the honeymoon.

4. Be able to hold an intelligent conversation

I'm not telling you that you need to be able to quote the latest stock market options or give your view on the war in Iraq or explain why a stimulus package might be good for the economy. All I'm saying is that when men view you as a woman they could learn something from, their interest—and their nether region—is piqued. Suddenly they not only want to get into your pants, but they'd like to hang out with you too because you're interesting. Interesting means that you're well-travelled, have passions, goals and dreams (over and above wanting a man) and that your social calendar includes more than man-hunting—the opera, the movies, dance classes, whatever.

5. Listen

Men love to talk. Specifically about themselves. While you might find this mightily boring, imagine what it'd be like for him if he had to listen to you harp on about

your period pains or your girlfriend's man problems the entire night! So cut him some slack, listen intently to what he has to say and ask questions pertinent to what he's telling you.

#62. STEAK IS ON ORDER (WANT TO IMPRESS A MAN? ORDER THE STEAK!)

Want to attract a man on the first date? Order the steak. According to a story in *New York Times*, if women mention in their online profiles or on the first date that they like steak, they're more likely to nab a date, keep a date and even be proposed to by their date, as long as they don't end up with meat between their teeth. Apparently a woman ordering steak on a first date proves she's 'unpretentious and down to earth and un-neurotic', as well as a cheap date, low maintenance and not afraid to show her tomboyish side.

6. Don't share your thoughts on marriage

I was speaking to Abigail, who told me about a brilliant date she once had with a man who had the same views on marriage as her. 'He also wants to get married and have a family sometime soon!' she gushed to me. 'We have the exact same goals—it's unbelievable. I really think he could be "the one".'

'Okay, so do you have a second date?' I asked.

'Well, er, no,' she replied. 'That's the weird thing. He said he was seeing some other younger girl. But still, we have all the same goals! We have the same ideals! I know I can get him! I'm even hotter than he is in the looks department. He said he wants to get married soon—how good is that?'

Hmm. Well, hold on just a minute. Remember Warning Sign #1: Always judge a man by his actions, not his words? If we judge this man by his actions, then he hasn't asked Abigail out again. In fact, he's bluntly told her that he's dating someone else. Who's younger and whose biological clock isn't going off. Get the picture?

Abigail thought this man was interested in marriage and wanted the same things she did. Often, men will express their ideas about big issues like marriage and kids as a test to see if this is a woman he could actually have a relationship with—without all the pressures that go along with it. So in reality, articulating your long-term hopes to a man is the one thing likely to make him run away.

7. Don't bring your ex on the date

Every single man I interviewed—yes, 100 per cent of them—said that when a woman harps on about her ex on the first date, or even mentions him, then she's setting herself up as damaged goods. While it might be an obvious topic of conversation to you, for him it's dead freaking boring. Even if he asks, simply say,

'The past is the past, let's talk about something more interesting.' You may be the first woman ever to have said that to him and he'll be mightily impressed.

8. Don't treat a date as a job interview

'If a girl asks me what I do within the first three minutes of a date, Donald Trump pops into my head and says "You're fired". It lacks imagination and pretty much indicates that she is a little too serious and looking for a provider/sugar daddy, or that she is going to judge me on how much I earn,' one guy told me.

9. Ditch your mobile

'There's a world of turn-offs out there, and cell phones are definitely among them. Women who don't have a preoccupation with their phone are a rare and preferable breed indeed,' another guy said.

10. How to end the first date

When it comes to the first date, saying goodbye is often the trickiest part. But if you keep true to yourself and don't harbour too many expectations, you can do it in style.

If you're not interested in a follow-up date, then all you have to do is say; 'It was nice seeing you', kiss him on the cheek or pat him on the back, thank him for dinner and say you had a great time. Under no circumstances should you make a promise to see him again. If he asks you when you're free to meet again, say, 'I'm really busy with work in the next few weeks

so anything is out of the question till after then.' That should give him the message that you're not keen to repeat the evening.

If you are interested in a follow-up date, then remember The Chase. Never, under any circumstances, ask him if he's going to call you again. And don't call him or press the issue. Attraction is not a two-way thing—it's *his* way.

11. Always offer to pay!

A whopping 70 per cent of men say they want to pay for the first date but would prefer the woman to offer. So doing the cursory wallet-grab isn't such a bad idea. Just make sure you actually have some cash in there in case he accepts!

Sex on the first date

Despite the amount of data on the subject, a question I so often get asked is whether women should sleep with a guy on the first date. 'But won't he expect it?' they say. 'If I don't, he's going to think I'm a loser or I don't like him.'

If you're asking yourself the same question, be aware that 67.1 per cent of men say if they sleep with you on the first date but don't call, they weren't that into you in the first place and were only after one thing. Don't be fooled!

You don't need to give him a line like, 'I don't do that' or 'We hardly know each other and I like to take

things slow' because he's heard them all too often before, and will probably think you got them out of *The Rules*[14] and it's all part of your grand plan to trap him!

A better tactic is to simply tell him this: 'I'm not sure if I want to sleep with you tonight; I might regret it in the morning,' with a big cheeky smile on your face. That way he knows that he needs to work doubly hard for your affections; not because you're a prude or you're scared of sex or you're not a modern woman, but because you're a modern woman who's learnt from her past and is in complete control of her destiny. Now what man wouldn't want a woman like that?

From the Male Room

> *'I am looking for someone to be with long term so I don't really sleep with girls on a first date . . . I have actually gone for two months since breaking up with my ex (despite many offers) because I don't want to lead anyone on and because I don't want average sex . . . I always have the greatest sex with someone I love.'*—**AG**

> *'Hypothetical: if I have started seeing a woman twice a week, and there is a mutual physical attraction, by the end of the first week I would be strongly desiring her. By the end of the second week the sexual tension would be almost unbearable, but the waiting would be quite a turn-on . . . building up the excitement.*

By the end of the third week, we would almost be ready to explode all over each other and every word and action would drip with pure lust. By the end of the fourth week, when the decision to take action has been made . . . the sex is complete and utter raw passion and lasts for about two days straight, better than any sex that you ever thought possible—the wait was sooooooooo worth it. Any longer than four weeks (thirty days), she'd better start considering other options. Simple as that. While I agree that waiting is a recipe for some incredible sex as per my example, every man has his limits. Be very careful, girls, that your chosen date does not reach his peak before it's too late.'—**Patrick**

After the first date

Urgh, the day after the first date. You felt the butterflies, you saw the sparkle in his eyes, he told you about his mum and now you're totally into him and think he could be 'the one'. Visions of marriage and babies start floating through your mind and, before you know it, you've mentally moved your wardrobe into his abode, met his parents and impressed his friends. Well, back off, Cleopatra. It was just one date. Even if he was the most charming, charismatic bloke you've ever met who promised you a trip to the Caribbean and commitment for life, know that actions speak louder than words. At least wait for the follow-up phone call before you start picking out your

baby names, because there's no point in obsessing over a man who isn't into you. No. Freaking. Point.

Thanks to the rumour that women are suffering from a man drought, the moment we get a flash of interest from an eligible suitor, suddenly the commitment part of our brains lights up like a giant big billboard. Scientists reckon that this irrational female response is due to the chemicals in the limbic system. A bunch of hormones are released into our bloodstream whenever a cute guy flirts with us, kisses us, or even sends us a text message with one too many xxxx. The chemical reaction that takes place inside our heads leads us to believe we've met our soul mate and that we should start placing our bets on him right now. It gets worse once we've kissed him. In fact, according to Professor Gallup at the State University of New York, Albany, who polled over 1000 respondents, as a woman

#63. DATING TIP:

If you're constantly waiting for ONE man to call, text or ask you out on another date, dating anxiety will set in. In the early stages of dating, ensure you've got all your emotional bases covered by having a string of men wining and dining you. Don't tell the other men your clever little plan—just act nonchalant when he asks you out next—you might in fact be genuinely busy!

swaps spit with a cute Lothario, she is subconsciously searching for olfactory, chemical and tactile cues from the guy to 'make a determination about instances of potential genetic incompatibility'. In other words, she's sizing him up as potential father material.

Women will often say that they could tell everything about the future relationship from the first kiss. Men, on the other hand, can forego the first kiss altogether and head straight to the sex part! Or view the pre-sex snog-fest as a means to an end.

In her brilliant book *Straight Up and Dirty*, Stephanie Klein advocates dating a 'pair and a spare'—three men—in order to ensure that you don't become obsessed with any one man. I strongly endorse this approach to dating.

#64. DATING TIP:

Professor Gallup wrote in the *Evolutionary Psychology Journal* this: 'Males tend to kiss as a way of trying to gain sexual favours, and also to attempt reconciliation.' Yeouch! Remember this when you're umming and ahhing over whether or not to kiss him back when he hasn't yet captured your full attention.

The WHHC syndrome: Why hasn't he called me yet?

So, he hasn't called and you feel like the lowest scum of the earth for even thinking that he might like you, and that he could indeed be 'the one'. As the days wear on and you're checking your phone more and more every second, you're twisting yourself into knots wondering what the hell went wrong. Get over it. It probably wasn't you at all. Maybe he got a blow job from some floozy the very next night and so moved you off his availables conga line. And don't think she's going to be special either. After he's done with her, he's going to move onto the next, until you're such a distant memory that he's forgotten he ever had your number. Men aren't like us. They don't analyse. They don't give a shit. They'd just rather not tell you they don't give a shit and so they leave you hanging.

#65. AFTER-DATE TIP:

DON'T CALL HIM if he hasn't called you! Men constantly complain that women come across as too needy, desperate and whiny, all because they bought her dinner and said he'd call. If he likes you, he will call despite how busy he might be!

The call diary

So, you refused to listen to my sound advice about not calling him and found your hand reaching towards your phone without your brain being able to stop it? And now you feel like a fool because he hasn't called, texted or emailed you back. It's been three whole hours and you can't stop yourself staring at your phone or checking that it still works. It does work. So breathe, put it away in a drawer and go for a run.

If you want to prevent this situation from happening again, then you need to keep a call diary. Here's what I want you to do right now, this minute. Grab a piece of paper and write down these words:

> I have just texted/called/emailed _____ *insert date's name here* And I feel like an idiot/moron/hopeless/rejected. I definitely should not have done it. Therefore, next time I am in this predicament I will NOT do any of the above. I will remember how I'm feeling right at this moment and know that I don't want to experience it ever again. I am worth more than this. I will not chase men.

Stick it up on your wall or on your mirror and stare at it until it sinks in. Most importantly, STOP making stupid excuses for him. If a man likes you, he'll call you. End of story.

When he *does* text/call/email you, repeat the exercise before you even think about responding. How

do you feel now? I bet you feel in control, on top of the world, like you hold all the power—which you do—since you're no longer the one doing the chasing. Which is exactly how I want you to feel ALL THE TIME.

Ever noticed how when you're out with really interesting people, or you're having the time of your life on another date, or you're in the middle of a pole-dancing lesson, suddenly all those woes about 'why hasn't he called me yet' go completely out the window? That's because your brain can really only process a few thoughts at one time, which means that when you're wholly concentrating on talking to someone else, or hanging upside down on a slippery pole, there's not much room to think about the cad that hasn't yet called you for a second date. Keep yourself occupied and you won't be moping around after him.

#66. AFTER-DATE TIP:

DON'T BE A TERRORIST TEXTER! Continuing to text and call despite getting the cold shoulder will mean he's laughing at you behind your back and never intends to call you again. STOP RIGHT NOW!

How to give good text

When you first start the courtship process, every text is analysed, pondered over, thought about and passed

around. A poorly worded text can be a potential landmine, so get it right from the start so you don't ruin The Chase.

The other day a girlfriend of mine was out at a club when she spotted a man who looked exactly like her crush. She immediately texted her crush: 'I've just spotted a guy that looks exactly like you. I'm giving him the eye.'

Five minutes later, his reply: 'Haha that's brilliant. Hey, do you want to catch up?'

Thirty minutes later, her: 'For sure. Deadline till Sat though. That work for you?'

Two minutes later, him: 'Sat is great! I'll book.'

Cute, funny things like her opener text can work wonders. And notice how she didn't include any of the 'hey babe' type phrases that so many women like to use. Making a guy laugh will boost the attraction, and the lack of even a hint of desperation will ensure that he looks forward to the date and wants to impress her.

Some other tips for giving good text

- Timing is everything. Don't assume that just because you're free, horny or craving human interaction, he is too. Sometimes a guy really is at dinner with his mum. Or in the middle of a business meeting. He got your text, I promise. He'll reply when he can.
- Don't be too candid. If he ditched you, dissed a date or hasn't called you back, under no circumstances should you berate him about this in a text. As much

as this goes against everything you want to do and say, keep it bright, breezy and friendly. NEVER write a text when you're angry. Remember—texts can be saved and then passed around.

- Do reply to a guy's text within a few hours. By waiting too long to reply, you're giving him licence to do the same to you. At the same time, you don't want to reply immediately, which might make it seem like you're doing nothing but waiting around all day for his text. As soon as I get a text, I make a phone call to someone else and usually the duration of that call ensures enough time has passed to make me not seem desperate.
- Stay clear of endearments. For some reason, men don't respond well—at least not early on—to words like 'baby', 'babe', 'sweetie', 'sexy', etc. Keep it neutral, funny and flirty but not gushy or girly. He'll get the drift!
- Don't always feel like you have to ask a question. Sometimes the best texts during The Chase are those that don't ask a question but make a witty or funny statement. That gives the subtle hint that you're into him and might be up for it, but lets him do the asking and the chasing.
- Try to make sure that he's the last one to text something and the first to text again the next time. It doesn't have to be a two-way street. In fact, my rule is that for every three texts he sends you, you can initiate the first text. Remember, it's always about being a little

unavailable and nonchalant—the ultimate Wonder Woman. If you need to gush to someone, send the text to your best girlfriend instead!

What to do when he does call

Woohoo! He called. Okay—it's only day one, just freakin' relax already. It's not like he's given you a ring. (And if he has, then he's really, really creepy and you should dump him immediately.) Don't do a victory dance just yet. It's just a phone call. He's still testing the waters. And if you've learnt anything in this book, then it's that you should be testing *him*. Are his actions in tune with what he's telling you?

What if a guy tells you he can't see you for a couple of weeks because he's on a work deadline or has to go away somewhere? How do you know if he's telling the truth? Maybe the line's a tactic he uses so he can date other people at the same time he's dating you. Well, you can bet your Supre leggings that he *is* dating other people.

Sophie found this out the hard way when a mutual friend spotted the guy she'd just started dating out on a date with someone else. Being smart, Sophie didn't call to confront him about it, which got him worried. So he called her.

'Er, I decided not to go away in the end,' he told her. 'She was just a friend . . . it meant nothing. Want to go out again?'

Sophie, applying the Wonder Woman strategy I'd

advocated (which you'll read about in Chapter 9), wasn't about to let him win—or, rather, lose—The Chase too soon.

'Hey, no sweat. These things happen,' she said nonchalantly. 'I can't talk right now as I'm in the middle of something.'

'Okay, can I call you in an hour?' he asked nervously.

'Two hours works.' She hung up the phone. He called back an hour and a half later. 'Can we go out Friday night?' he asked.

Sophie was free, but she didn't want to make it too easy for him.

'Can we make it Saturday night instead? I have something on Friday night,' she replied sweetly.

'Done!' he said. 'I'm going to organise something super special.'

The Chase was back on and she was in control.

Reasons men give for not calling after the first date

Here are some of the responses I got when I asked men what'd stop them calling after a date.

- 'You looked nothing like the picture on your online dating profile.'
- 'When your girlfriend calls you in the middle of our date and you start blabbing away about what you did last night, I find myself slowly reaching

into my pocket to fake a phone call from my Uncle John who happened to fall down a flight of stairs with his discharged life-alert bracelet and his new iPhone . . .'

- 'I'm not sure whether to buy you dinner or ask your hourly rate. If I am looking for a potential relationship, there is nothing that will make me turn tail and run more than if you turn up in a miniskirt with your boobs half hanging out and then flirt with every guy that you see.'
- 'I just wasn't feeling it. I really can't break this one down any further. If I am not feeling it, I will not lead you on. I would only hope that you have the same courtesy to do that to me instead of leading me on.'
- 'There was a good football game on TV the next day and I plain forgot.'

From the Male Room

'Guys don't trust women easily. It takes longer than seeing each other a couple of times to be thinking if you are even serious about her or not, let alone getting married, having babies, meeting the parents and grandparents! Look at it this way, ladies: do you buy the first thing off the rack? I bet you look all day and then maybe go back the next. Many guys do the same thing with women.'—**Randomguy-somehow**

'I'm not sure that women being upfront and stating what they want on their first date is particularly businesslike. You don't walk into your first meeting with someone with a list of "here's what I want, take it or leave it". You have to build relationships with your clients/business partners and know not only what you want to get out of it but also what you can offer—it's a two-way thing, with negotiation and compromise. I remember, back when I was a little graduate, being told that when dining with potential new clients you never discuss business on the first outing—it's for getting to know them and starting to build the relationship. You could easily apply that to non-business relationships. You might really want to have children, but it's not a bad idea to wait until you know you might like to have them with this particular person before introducing that topic of conversation.'—**Andy**

'If someone puts their desire for marriage and babies on the table on the second date, I just do the opposite: "Okay, that's great. Things for me to consider. While we're on the subject, how do you feel about not hassling me when I want to: a) Maintain my own identity and masculinity while attending to a healthy relationship with you that involves some affection and attention to your own wants and needs? b) Not comment on your particular emotion or overreaction to my particular personality trait that was once an

alluring part of 'the package'? c) Go to a game with my mates every so often? d) Watch five days of test cricket once per year without fear of reprisal or niggling? e) Be silent (quite possibly something that—SURPRISE!—has nothing to do with you at all)? f) Pursue an activity you consider entirely pointless and trivial for no other reason than I think it is fun? g) Tell it like it is without discussing the 'meaning' (as defined by you) of what I said? h) Be recognised and appreciated for what I DO, rather than simply what I don't do? i) Be me. I like me. You do too. Get over it."

Can we sign a contract and move on?'—**Clarity**

'Hey, I am all up for women taking initiative in talking about what sexual positions they like and their bedroom trick to drive their man wild. However, talking even vaguely about or in reference to weddings, babies, families are sure as hell off-putting. A clear sign to start running.

'I have no qualms whatsoever about independent women talking about what they do for a living or how they like to relax, or, better still, how they like to be pleasured. Likes and dislikes are extremely important for any relationship, and the most important factor is whether or not you two are going to get along.

'Smart looks, interesting conversation, good body, similar likes and dislikes . . . bring it on!' —**Mogambo**

The myth of the third-date rule

The unspoken truth of first dates is that the man pays, the woman is paid for and all is right and balanced in the world. The male attempts to court the female, willingly proffering his hard-earned dollars in a bid to impress her. More recently, however, with the proliferation of the third-date rule, he knows that he won't be putting down the dough for too long before he gets the opportunity to jump into her pants. He simply pays for three dates and she sleeps with him on the third, or it's over. At least, that's the view of controversial LA-based radio host Tom Leykis.

The Leykis 101 Rules have struck a chord with scorned gents everywhere. Leykis advises his students to 'dump that bitch' if she doesn't sleep with him on the third date because, by his reckoning, it means she has no intention of ever doing so. Leykis also recommends that men should never spend more than $40 on a date, asserting that: 'more money spent during a date will not necessarily lead to a better chance of sex, contrary to the belief of most "uninformed" men.'

Even if you don't like the sounds of Tom Leykis or his 101 rules, you probably won't be surprised to learn that according to The Modern Man Survey (which I conducted in 2009), 40 per cent of women and 40 per cent of men go by the 'third-date rule', meaning they expect sex on the third date.

#67. THE NEW THIRD-DATE RULE:

Do you like him enough to sleep with him? Has he wooed you, chased you, paid for your dinner and called when he said he would? If not, DON'T DO IT! He's a CANDY MAN and you aren't looking for a sugar fix.

In response to Leykis's diatribe, I've put together my own rule, which I advocate to all women wanting a free dinner: *If you don't intend to sleep with the bloke, always pay your share*. I'm serious. The third-date rule is rampant, so if you're not ready for sex, don't get caught in the trap.

Take the sad tale of Janelle, who ignored my sage advice and allowed the guy to pay on the third date anyway, despite having no intention of getting into bed with him. When it came time to drop her home, he casually mentioned that they'd both be heading back to his place. When she refused, he simply opened the car door, kicked her out and drove off. Just like that. Left her on the street to find her own way home. While most men wouldn't dream of being so callous, there's a lesson to be learnt when it comes to giving people false expectations.

If you're ready to do the horizontal hanky-panky on the third date, then by all means go ahead. Just know that this doesn't necessarily mean it's going to go anywhere serious yet. Chances are he's just waiting

around to get you into the sack. You know the signs by now. And you also know that you don't have to be pressured into anything you don't want to do.

So when should you sleep with a guy? According to the men from The Modern Man Survey:

- 11 per cent of men expect women to put out on the first date
- 42.5 per cent go by the third-date rule
- 34.7 per cent are happy to wait around for one month
- 6.5 per cent will wait up to three months
- 5 per cent will wait from three to six months.

From the Male Room

'If you feel something for the person you are seeing and you believe you can make something of it, you wait. I casually dated a girl for over a month before sleeping with her, there was no pressure from either of us . . . in fact it was me that wanted to wait as too many times I have jumped in and ruined potential relationships with sex.'—**Laurence**

'It happens when it happens. And realistically, it's mutual or it's not. If one person wants it and the other doesn't (regardless of which gender is which) you are clearly on different wavelengths and should call it quits. First or fifteenth date, you're simpatico or you move on.'—**N**

'Depends. If I see lots of potential, I'll wait. If I sense I am being played, by-bye.'—**Sam**

'Totally on a case-by-case basis, but if a girl is not putting out at all on the third date, it can be easy to lose interest.'—**Hank**

'It's not the three-date rule as such, but I would want to know pretty early in the piece if there is some sexual chemistry, otherwise I would not see much point in persevering with a relationship.'—**Gabrielle**

'I would probably say I would wait between the "third-date rule" and one month. If I feel a strong connection with someone I would not mind waiting a longer period of time. I don't typically use rules because I believe relationships are all unique and should be handled differently in different situations.'—**Terrance**

'I fell for a girl a while ago who didn't want to have sex after three dates. I fell for her more after that. When we finally did do it on about the fifth date it was probably the most sensual experience I have ever had. It wasn't fucking, it was making love. Sweet, sweet love. Sweet, sweet, sweet love. Our relationship was strong, until I ended up spending eight out of every twelve months overseas for the last two to three. It's not fair to do that if you really love someone. If you truly love something, you'll know that there comes a time when you have to let go.'—**Vince**

A Cautionary Tale: Jane

One night, during a romantic dinner with Duncan at a new restaurant on Sunset called Boa to celebrate their one-month anniversary, Jane's phone beeped. She excused herself, went to the bathroom and checked the message. It was from the Producer. He was back in town after shooting a movie abroad. 'Can't wait to see you,' the message said. 'I miss you.'

Jane's stomach did a backflip. She instantly wrote back—all the pain and heartache immediately evaporated as she imagined them frolicking together. She would be in control this time. She was sure of it.

The night before the Producer arrived, Jane could hardly sleep. She couldn't wait to see him.

She arrived at his Hollywood house wearing a black leather miniskirt, a white buttoned-down shirt and lace-up peep-toe Zac Posen heels.

'Wow, you look amazing,' said the Producer when she walked through the door. 'And so tanned.' He hugged her. 'God, I've missed you,' then leaned in to kiss her on the lips. She turned away so he got her cheek. After all, she had a boyfriend now and she wasn't going to let this man ruin that. But the Producer didn't seem even slightly perturbed.

They chatted like old friends, and when he asked her to come upstairs to his room while he unpacked, she didn't refuse. Her mind was racing and her pheromones were heating up.

In his room, Jane sank down onto the bed, her leather miniskirt riding up her legs. He walked towards her, that hungry look in his eyes, and bent down so his face was close to hers. Again, he leaned in for a kiss. Didn't this guy get the message?

'Sorry, I can't do it,' she said softly. 'Not now.'

She had a life to live. She had finally got it all together and met someone else. Or, at least, bumped into someone from her past.

'At least have dinner with me tonight?' he begged.

She agreed. Her loyal boyfriend Duncan was heading out of town and she'd be all alone. Besides, what harm could it really do just to have dinner?

The city lights flickered as Jane and the Producer gazed at the spectacular view from the balcony of the swanky restaurant he'd chosen for dinner.

'I've missed you,' he said, grabbing her hand.

'So why didn't you call?' Jane asked, doing her best to act nonchalant about the whole situation. Which meant smiling a lot. And resisting the urge to wring his neck.

'I had a girlfriend. She was quite clingy.'

Jane swallowed hard. All that time she'd spent obsessing over him, questioning herself, the constant going over it in her head to work out what the hell went wrong, what she might have said or done to turn him off her—and the entire time he was just with someone else. The conga-line theory was true. She had been completely duped. What a freaking idiot I am, *she thought. The photo she'd found on Facebook hadn't lied. He'd*

hooked up with someone else almost immediately after her. And they'd been together ever since.

#68. THE GIRLFRIEND THEORY:

When men tell you they have a girlfriend, they can often be perceived as even more attractive. Something in the female psyche tells you that if one woman has declared this man 'suitable boyfriend material', he mustn't be that bad. Don't fall into the trap. She is the unlucky one. Not you.

The Producer interrupted her thoughts. 'I just want to let you know, someone else will be joining us for dinner.'

Moments later, a gorgeous, long-legged blonde girl was standing behind them. It all happened so fast. Suddenly the Producer and the girl were kissing hello, and then he was introducing her to Jane. Jane was speechless. Was this his idea of a joke? When she finally mustered up the strength to say something, she asked the girl, 'So how do you know the Producer?'

'Through Facebook actually,' the girl giggled, glancing nervously at Jane, then at him. Her nose wiggled when she talked.

After an excruciatingly painful meal during which the girl and the Producer flirted shamelessly while Jane downed a few more bellinis, the three of them headed to a nearby bar where they shared a pitcher of lychee martini mix. By then Jane was blind drunk.

'I'm getting a cab,' she slurred.

'Okay,' said the Producer, kissing her goodbye. 'I'll call you tomorrow.' Then he returned his attention to the girl. Jane saw him leaning in to kiss her as the cab whisked her away.

The following day the Producer sent her a text: 'The night was boring without you.'

Jane wondered why she'd fallen into his trap again. Wondered why she was allowing herself to get upset over such a cad. She had Duncan now. She should be over this. But, somehow, she couldn't resist.

So when the Producer invited Jane to his film's premier, she decided to go as Duncan was still away. When she arrived he was surrounded by women but this time Jane didn't care. She mingled and networked and barely spoke to him all night.

'Want to come back to my place and watch a movie?' the Producer asked her when the night wound down.

She was about to agree, despite herself, when two girls came over, both wearing designer dresses and sparkly heels, one who she recognised from dinner a few nights before and the other looked about twenty-one.

'Want to come with us?' the Producer asked the girls. 'We can make it a foursome.' He winked. The girls nodded eagerly.

Jane was horrified.

'You gotta let loose, Janey,' he whispered in her ear, touching her on the shoulder. 'I thought you were the type of girl up for anything.'

But Jane wasn't having any of it. She picked up her handbag and stormed out of the party—and out of his life. Who did this guy think he was? She finally realised she

had to let go for good and concentrate on moving her life forward.

Tears rolled down her cheeks. How could I have been so stupid? *she thought. Almost compromising the best relationship of her life for a player? And then she received a text message. It was from Duncan.*

'Hope you had a great night at the party. I've missed you. I've got a surprise for you when I get home. How do you feel about . . . a romantic weekend away?'

Jane's heart skipped a beat. This was real. Duncan was real. He was always doing amazing things for her. He promised her the world and he always delivered. What was she doing even considering the Producer over him? Duncan wanted her, Jane, just as she was. There would be no other women. No blow-ins. She was enough for him—as she'd now realised he was for her.

#69. CHASING JANE:

No matter how hard you try to play the player's game right back at him, you're ALWAYS going to fail. No matter how savvy you think you are or how brilliant you might be at deflecting his advances, you're never going to win in the face of a player. It's a lose-lose situation. The only solution? Get out, and fast. Or better yet, don't get involved in the first place. Of course, you need to know all the signs UPFRONT so you don't end up like Jane . . .

9

Wonder Woman: The woman men want to chase

Figure out who you are separate from your family, and the man or woman you're in a relationship with. Find who you are in this world and what you need to feel good alone. I think that's the most important thing in life. Find a sense of self because with that, you can do anything else.

Angelina Jolie

Men and women, women and men;
it will never work.

Erica Jong

Who is Wonder Woman?

The difference between the Candy Girls and the Wonder Woman is enormous. The Wonder Woman is that amazing creature who keeps men wondering and so has them desperately vying for her attention.

#70. WONDER WOMAN TIP:

Men like women who are not easily impressed by their car, their money, their ability to trade stocks or their celebrity friends. Don't be that gushy girl. Keep your cool, but always be gracious.

Over the years, many men have learnt that in order to get a woman into bed, they need to impress her. That aside, it's their inherent male nature to be competitive, to aspire to be the alpha male. Many men have formulated a set of tactics and manoeuvres, tested and perfected, to get a woman to sleep with him. And they usually work. *Women are so easily impressed!* he laughs to himself. And then comes along Wonder Woman (WW). She isn't impressed by his motorbike or his black Amex or his bulging biceps. She doesn't care for his ability to lift iron or that all his mates are celebrities, or that he's a celebrity himself. She doesn't give a toss. She's so secure, confident and happy within herself that she doesn't need to use a man to define who she is. She wants to know him for his own sake,

not because of his possessions, his friends or his social status.

When I first started interviewing men, particularly those many women would refer to as assholes or bad boys, I was amazed to discover that EVERY SINGLE ONE of these men had experienced something similar: they'd all met and dated the love of their lives, and they still hadn't really got over her. They had sex with all these other women, the Candy Girls, just because they were bored, lonely or horny. It had nothing whatsoever to do with their search for a soul mate. Which, by the way, most admitted they weren't averse to meeting if she happened to come along.

When I asked the men to describe the qualities of their LOL (Love Of Life), they all named very similar characteristics:

- **She can teach him something.** I kid you not: men like women who actually have half a brain (okay, maybe a full brain) and are able to expand their minds and help them think about the world in a different way. It can be the simplest thing—like introducing him to a new band that he's never heard of, taking him to an art gallery, or even showing him a new part of town.

  I once taught a guy I was dating how to do a great resume that increased his chances of getting a job. He couldn't believe it! Other men have told me that women who are interested in opera or ballet

or art, or can speak another language, are viewed as WWs not BJCs. 'Even if I'm bored senseless at the opera,' one Lothario told me, 'at least I'm thinking to myself, *Wow, this girl has a lot to offer me*. She has something different to talk about other than her single life and her quest to find a man.'

Yes, men like to be the alpha in the relationship, leading the way, paying for dinners, looking after you and being the one you lean on, but they also like to be mentally challenged by you, stimulated, taught new things and expanded. Don't get caught up in the Paris Hilton way of wooing a man—he'll stick around for less time than it takes her to change her outfit.

- **Men like women they can get to know.** I know you have something special to offer a man. I know that you're a great person who isn't *only* focused on getting married and having kids. I know that. You're my readers and many of you write in to tell me what fantastic women you are. So let him darn well see that! Hopping into a dark cupboard with him with your bra off so he can grope you in the dark is not going to allow him to see that. And talking about marriage and kids is going to scare him shitless. So get a grip and start projecting the WW in you!
- **She's 'low-maintenance'.** I've often heard men use the phrase 'high-maintenance woman' and it's always confused the heck out of me. So I decided to ask the gents what they meant. Was it the fact

that she took hours to do her hair in the morning? Spent too long at the gym each day? Or that she simply wanted too much of his attention?

One man explained to me that there are a few types of high-maintenance women—and you don't want to be any of them.

'There's the "attention whores" who require way too much of my time and attention. The "wallet cruncher" is high maintenance because she's always asking me for money to pay for things and to buy her presents. The "foo-foo"—the one who spends the longest time getting ready—is generally absolutely gorgeous and probably cosmetically enhanced and used to being primped and pampered at all times. I guess you could say she's the worst type. Oh, and they generally don't put out.'

Being a low-maintenance kind of gal means having your own thing going, not seeming to do everything in your power to impress a man and garner his attention, and not expecting him to pay all your bills.

#71. WONDER WOMAN TIP:

THE MINUTE HE THINKS OF YOU AS 'HIGH MAINTENANCE', your worth goes right out the window and you're put right back into the Candy Girl category. Keep your cool, even if you chip a nail, lose an eyelash or break a heel. Laugh it off, and cry about it LATER. Alone.

I recently had the opportunity to interview a Wonder Woman who seems to encompass all the qualities of the ultimate Wonder Woman—well, according to the gents anyway. Her name is Heidi Klum.

Why Heidi Klum is the ultimate Wonder Woman

'I just love Australians,' Heidi gushed to me, before picking up a top hat that happened to be sitting on the table and placing it on top of her shoulder-length shiny blonde hair. 'So how do I look?' she asked me in her sugary-sweet voice, displaying her perfect Hollywood-enhanced smile.

She began to dance, waving her hands in the air and shaking her butt, even though there was no music playing. She had that carefree attitude that many men had explained to me was what made them want to stay with one girl and not another—the low-maintenance gal who dances to her own beat.

After we chatted a little about what it means to be a Victoria's Secret Angel, I asked the clincher: how does she keep the spark alive with her husband, Seal.

'You have to be sexy all the time,' she told me. 'You know, people always ask me how I stay in shape, how do I do it? But what really makes me do it is the knowledge that I have a hot man waiting at home for me. I don't want to be a slouchbag for him. I have to

keep up appearances . . . That's why I love wearing sexy lingerie underneath my clothes. It's great knowing that when the first layer comes off, there is something really sexy underneath.'

When I asked her what turns her off, she told me that it's people who talk about themselves too much. 'They should be talking about the world—anything interesting. But not about themselves.'

I realised that despite all Heidi's success, wealth and status, her main focus in life was making her husband happy. And to do that, she played up her feminine side, kept things light and humorous and generally became the ultimate Wonder Woman in the process.

#72. WONDER WOMAN TIP:

You don't have to be a Victoria's Secret Angel to be his Wonder Woman. But you do need to be well-groomed, ooze sex appeal and have confidence in order to be the apple of his eye. Have an easy breezy attitude at all times—oh, and dance to your own beat.

Looks vs personality: The great debate

I often hear women complaining that since they're not the best-looking femme in the bunch, they're finding it

tough to find a bloke. So I was elated to discover that a recent survey confirmed the fact that gentlemen prefer Miss Average to the 'perfect' centrefold body.

That's right, ladies, you can finally stop holding your belly in for fear that it's going to deter the next hot-blooded male that turns your way. Apparently, a five-foot-four female with a thirty-inch waist and forty-inch hips who wears a size fourteen is what many men desire. The survey, which was reported in *New Scientist* magazine, says 'too thin' is out, and an hourglass figure is in.

According to a comment by Dave Bolton in response to the story on the *Daily Mail* news website, this revelation is nothing new: 'Once again a study finds what we men already know and have been saying for years, but women just wouldn't listen.'

From the Male Room

> *'I have dated high-maintenance women. At first you excuse some of the high-maintenance behaviours as "cute", or you let them slip because after months of going without you are getting regular sex finally. That all wears thin after a while and you recognise them for the miserable, selfish bits of work that they are. If you are sensible, at this point you discard them. If you are not sensible about it and stay with them, you run the risk of having your very soul and vitality sucked from you.'*—**Migs**

'I can't stand the thought of high-maintenance women. Besides the cost, drama and time associated with high maintenance, I often wonder about the insecurities being compensated for. Shave this, dye that, get the hair done again!

'Give me a woman who is quietly confident within herself and who is to some degree unaware of her effect on the opposite sex. This to me is the essence of class. By the same token I couldn't tolerate a woman who'd just "given up".

'Bottom line: dress well (not flashily), be clean, lay off the face render, don't appear too desperate and, above all, be a genuinely nice person.'—**Steve**

'Ultimately, though, what most men would like is someone who is pretty to them, likes the way that they look and who laughs at their jokes (lame though they might be). If she likes Star Wars *that is a serious bonus.'*—**F365**

'I love a fit, happy, healthy girl with a great sense of humour who loves to have sex twice a day, doesn't play games and doesn't have to wear make-up. It's also really important to me that she only has eyes for me. Girls who need to have the attention of every guy in the room are just painful to be with.'—**Ari Gold**

'To me, the Wonder Woman is one who is confident in body and mind, who gives but isn't afraid

to take, who will listen as much as she talks, who appreciates that time apart is as important as time together, who is able to socialise with different kinds of people, who is tolerant and forgiving but not for repeated sins, who enjoys a vibrant and adventurous sex life but also has an interest in deeper matters of the heart. Oh, and must love dogs. Never trust anyone who doesn't love dogs.'—**Been There, Done That**

'Personality: bubbly, savvy, sensitive, sweet, outgoing, witty, ultra-feminine, elegant, graceful, affectionate (this one seems to be missing from Aussie girls) and kind. Oh, and just the tiniest bit crazy and mysterious.' —**Gary**

A Cautionary Tale: Poppy

Poppy was livid. No-one fucked with Poppy Belle. Especially not some weasel like Doug Rush. Oh, no. He would pay. Poppy was sure of it. She thought about how she was going to exact her revenge as she expertly wound her convertible Mini Cooper down the road towards his apartment. She glanced at herself in the rear-view mirror. Her signature long blonde hair, which was usually expertly ironed flat, was tousled and dirty. The rims of her blue eyes were stained red from the tears that so rarely showed themselves. Thank God for oversized sunglasses, *she thought.*

How could this have happened? Who the fuck did Doug Rush think he was to mess her around like that? How dare he! She was Poppy Belle, the darling of the fashion world! The sexpot of the city! What the hell had gone wrong? It wasn't as though she didn't give him sex. Boy, did she ever. And it wasn't as though she was needy, whiny or pushing him into commitment. She wasn't! And it wasn't like he wasn't into her—he called her all the freaking time. But he was a bona fide commitment-phobe. Just like all the other men she'd dated.

She thought back to when she'd returned home from Fiji. Doug was waiting for her at the airport with a single pink rose (her favourite colour) and two tickets to Miami.

'I want you all to myself this weekend,' he'd cooed in her ear.

#73. CANDY GIRL FACT:

The party girl will never be taken seriously by a man. No matter how many times you attempt to explain you're different, he will inevitably view you as a boost to his ego, a quick fix and a fleeting fling. Nothing more.

They'd spent the weekend frolicking on the beach, digging their toes in the sand and making love in every position imaginable.

The more time they spent together, the more she became confused.

'He wants to spend every day and night with me, but refuses to call me his girlfriend,' she'd told Jane over the phone from the bathroom of the hotel. 'I just don't get it. His actions don't match his words. And the worst part? He refuses to say he loves me.'

Then last night at Bar Marmont with the girls, Courtney Luu had come bouncing out of nowhere, wearing a raspberry see-through dress that looked like it was made from a few handkerchiefs sewn together.

'Hiiii,' she's purred, touching Poppy's shoulder. 'How arrrre you doing?' Courtney had arched one perfectly sculpted eyebrow and Poppy had noticed she was wearing ice-blue contact lenses.

'Hi,' Poppy had replied, glancing around with a bored expression on her face.

'How was the shoot?' Courtney asked, her breasts giving a little jiggle. Poppy noticed she wasn't wearing a bra. Typical.

'Oh, you know, it was all right, I guess.' Poppy turned her back to talk to someone else, then she felt a tap on her back.

'Courtney, I'm in the middle of a conversation—'

'I fucked Doug the day you left,' Courtney said quickly, her cat-like eyes turning cold and hard. 'He called me and asked me to come over. I just thought you should know.'

Poppy remained expressionless. 'Is that all you have to say, Courtney?'

'Well, er . . .'

'Well, I already knew,' Poppy said coolly, 'but thanks for letting everyone else know what type of a girl you really are.'

Poppy picked up her handbag and left, her head held high. She was careful not to let Courtney or anyone else see any sign of weakness. Especially the small tear that was starting to well up in her left eye . . .

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Part 3

Managing the Modern Relationship

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A Cautionary Tale: Poppy

Poppy sat on the toilet seat after drinking her second glass of guava juice in as many minutes. Please God, don't let this be happening, *she thought. She got out another stick from the ominous-looking box, read the instructions for the third time, then peed on the stick. She carefully placed the lid back on it and pointed it downwards. The waiting was the worst part. Those three minutes it took for the liquid to do its thing on the stick until the blue line magically appeared, or didn't, felt like hours. She hoped to God it would be blank.*

Fucking Doug, *she thought again for the hundredth time that day.* That prick doesn't deserve me. And now I might be carrying his baby. *She hadn't seen him since last week, when she'd gone to his place to confront him about cheating on her.*

Poppy looked at the stick in her hand. The first blue line had immediately appeared in the first box, a sign that the test had worked. As she peered at the second box, she thought she could make out a faint blue line. She gave an audible gasp. This is it, *she thought.* My life is about to change. *She looked at the box again. Yes, there was definitely a blue line there.*

She tried calling Doug but he didn't answer. How the hell was she going to tell him? She'd send a text. Hopefully he'd respond to that.

'Listen, Doug, I want to talk,' she wrote. 'Leave things on a good note. Are you free to meet?'

'Coffee shop outside my office. 11 am tomorrow,' he replied immediately.

It was cold, harsh, unemotional. Who the hell had she been dating all these months, Poppy asked herself. Who was this guy? She felt confused and angry at herself for getting into this mess in the first place. There was no-one she could tell. The media would pounce on the story like hounds and rip her to shreds. She could see the headlines now: 'Golddigger!' 'Attention-seeker!' 'Party girl gets knocked up!' Her parents wouldn't understand. And her friends? Well, she wasn't exactly sure who she could trust. She wasn't about to take any chances. She had a career to maintain, and no-one was going to hire a pregnant model.

This couldn't be happening to her. But it damn well was.

'I'm pregnant,' Poppy said the next day in the coffee shop.

The words seemed to cut Doug like a knife.

'You'll take care of this, won't you?' he said, keeping his eyes on his latte as he took a slow, contemplative sip.

'Well, that's what I wanted to discuss—'

'There's nothing to discuss, Poppy.' His eyes were cold. His hands were trembling. 'Just get rid of it. I'll support you, but only if you do that.'

She didn't know what to say. He knew she was broke. He knew that she'd never be able to have this baby on her own. But she was already two and a half months gone. She didn't have much time. She was utterly torn, and he wasn't making it any easier.

'Doug, I'm thirty years old. I might never have this chance again. Please consider it.'

Her voice was quiet and surprisingly controlled. She didn't like to beg, but she wasn't so sure she wanted to give up this baby.

'Just do what needs to be done, Poppy. I know you'll make the right decision.'

She hadn't told anyone, but somehow the press had got hold of the story anyway. The news that she was knocked up had flashed across the media and everyone had delighted in knocking her down. The pain, loneliness and sadness had washed over her like a giant black cloud, threatening to stop her from ever smiling again.

But she refused to let them drag her down. She was going to start over. Without Doug.

She thought back to six months ago, when she'd met Doug—now she saw it as the fork in the road. Would she have done things differently if she'd been able to see Doug then as she saw him now? As he really was rather than what she'd imagined him to be? She had projected so many of her fantasies onto their relationship that she'd been too blind to

#74. LOVE WARNING:

Telling yourself you're 'in love' for the sake of wanting to be in love will only end in heartache down the track. You can never be too cautious with your heart!

see that he was a weak man without any backbone. She had wanted so desperately to be in love that she'd ignored the warning signs.

And now, she was having his baby.

10

Choosing the right relationship

A relationship, I think, is like a shark, you know? It has to constantly move forward or it dies . . .

Woody Allen

Don't settle for a relationship that won't let you be yourself

Oprah Winfrey

Are you settling?

In case you've never watched it, *The Bachelor* is a US reality TV show where a bunch of execs handpick twenty-five of the sexiest, most genetically blessed single women to compete for the attention of the hottest, most desirable single male in the country. The drama unfolds as, one by one, the women are crossed off the list until there's only one woman standing. The bachelor is then supposed to propose to her and they're to live happily ever after.

Series number three had a very interesting outcome, and one that we can all learn from. When contestant Jennifer Schefft, a petite blonde account manager, won the heart of dazzling fortune heir Andrew Firestone back in 2003, many believed she'd hit the jackpot. After all, Firestone had been dubbed the 'seemingly perfect man' and 'one of the country's most eligible bachelors'. Besides, not only did he have brooding good looks, but he appeared kind, genuine and genuinely infatuated with his chosen contestant. So what's not to love? Fast forward a few months and—shock, horror—Schefft was back on the market. Why? She says the relationship 'fizzled out', and she wasn't prepared to settle for anything less than she believed she rightly deserved.

She quickly signed up for another reality TV show, *The Bachelorette*. This time, she was the star of the show, and in the driver's seat. It was up to her to choose a

suitable bachelor from the cream of the crop. (And if you've ever seen the contestants on these shows, you'll know that they're not too shabby at all.) At the end of the show, the world waited with bated breath to see who she would choose. Everyone ended up disappointed as Schefft turned down both of the last two men standing. She claimed the 'spark' she was after just wasn't there.

'She wants to be alone? How will she cope without a man!' people said in horror.

'You'll be a Bachelorette forever!' gasped *The View*'s Elisabeth Hasselback.

But Schefft was standing by her guns. She refused to settle because of societal expectations, her nagging mum or the fact that complete strangers berated her for letting her eggs 'rot'. In retaliation, she went on to pen the book *Better Single Than Sorry*, defending her non-settling ways.

#75. NEVER SETTLE!

Just because society expects you to be married by now, doesn't mean you have to grab and walk down the aisle with the first eligible bachelor who comes your way. Your happiness comes first, not that of your pushy relatives.

A few years later, she did indeed meet 'the one'—a stock trader named Joe Waterman. And they recently

got hitched. Schefft's advice for all the single women out there is simply this: 'Don't settle'. Despite Schefft's story being proof of what can happen when you don't listen to anything else but your heart, for many women the question of settling can be a difficult notion to grasp. How do you know if you're settling, being too picky or have genuinely found 'the one'?

Journalist Lori Gottlieb (author of *Stick Figure: A Diary of My Former Self*) shocked many singletons (and the world) when she encouraged women to marry 'Mr Good Enough' in a story she penned for the *The Atlantic* magazine. Her argument was that 'settling' would be the perfect antidote to a sobering report that claimed there were currently more single gals in circulation than during World War I. In other words, we should say yes to the first douchebag that comes along in case we wind up alone. What a load of hogwash.

Instead, I strongly advise you to objectively analyse your situation within the following categories: Are you with Mr Right? Or are you with Mr Good Enough? And be honest—it's your future that's at stake and the only person's happiness that matters is yours.

Mr Good Enough

- You prefer to go out with your girlfriends on the weekend rather than stay in with him.
- He talks to you badly.
- He's ungenerous.

- You often suspect he is cheating and he revels in his ability to make you jealous.
- He's a money leech and you often find yourself forking out to cover his share of the bills too.
- He still refuses to acknowledge the fact that you are together.
- You have different priorities and life goals and neither of you is prepared to compromise.
- He's abusive.[15]

Mr Right

- You feel safe, secure and at peace when you are around him.
- You always find yourself wanting to hang out with him, even if you're doing nothing special.
- He is loyal, kind and honest with you at all times.
- You are able to completely be yourself around him.
- You have shared values.
- He has the same goals as you when it comes to a family.
- He is proud of you and you of him.
- He makes you feel special.
- There's no doubt in your mind that he is faithful to you.

Remember, ladies, just don't get too caught up the idea that the only man for you is Prince Charming. Brad Pitt is already taken!

Don't assume you're monogamous (yet)

When dating someone you know is right for you, you'll eventually ask yourself the inevitable question: 'So, where is this relationship going?' And who can blame you? After all, you've stopped dating other men, deleted the number of your booty-call buddy from your Blackberry and picked out your potential wedding gown (okay, not all of you will do this, but you get my drift). In your view, your man-search is finally over. So now you're thinking about how to broach the question with him. You're probably thinking that you should text him the words 'We need to talk', right? Wrong. Say, text, email or tweet that little question and trust me when I say he won't be chasing you any longer.

'We need to talk about where this relationship is heading' is a phrase many men loathe to hear. When that sentence comes spluttering out, The Chase is instantly ruined. So before you hit speed dial to question your current date about where all those late-night visits and debauched escapades are leading, take heed of this story from the Male Room.

Carefree, independent female meets hot, independent man. They kiss, swap numbers, date and meet each other's mates. But she's still unsure of where this is all going. One day she can't get hold of him. She assumes he's out with another woman. She vows

#76. NEVER THREATEN A MAN'S FREEDOM!

They value this as the utmost quality of their single lives. If they feel you're a threat to it in any way, you'll be dumped faster than you imagine.

to dump the cad for good. Or at least pretends to herself that's what she's going to do, but really she's desperately waiting for a call, an email, an explanation. When he eventually calls, she cracks it.

'Where the hell have you been?' she wails. He tells her his mobile battery cut out, that he left his phone in his apartment when he went to work, or that he simply forgot. But it's too late. The female becomes paranoid and obsessive. She tells him they need to talk about their relationship. His defences immediately shoot up; he wants to gag, to run and hide. She asks him where this is all going. He says, can't they enjoy the ride while they're having fun? She screams that if all he sees her as is a bit of fun, she's wasting her time. She tells him it's over and hangs up.

'What happened to the breezy, beautiful girl I first started dating?' he wonders in shock. Then feels relieved the conversation is over. 'Oh well. Another one bites the dust.'

'At first I thought it was all so great,' Sid, an art gallery owner, told me. He'd just ended a one-month fling with a girl named Sally. 'For a while it was perfect.

I'd go over to her place at midnight, leave by 2 am, and didn't have to call her, meet her parents or accompany her to her best friend's wedding. It was casual, meaningless and fantastic. Then, just as I'm about to leave her place one night, she asks me to stay over. When I told her I had to get up for work, she dropped the "where is it going" thing on me. Why did she have to do that? I was out of there so fast that I left my jumper behind. And then I had to catch the bus home in just a pair of pants in five-degree weather at two in the morning! I got a lot of strange stares.'

The opposite type of woman is one who doesn't whine, nag or put any demands on him; she simply enjoys the relationship for what it is. She's fun, flirtatious and they make each other laugh. At the two-month mark, they're lying in bed together and she wants nothing more than to be able to define their relationship. She wants to be able to call him her boyfriend; for him to call her his girlfriend. But she keeps it zipped. She knows the power of waiting. Not waiting for him to make the decision for her, but waiting to get to the point where she no longer seems a threat to his freedom. Perhaps the following day, the following month, or even six months down the track, he'll wake up one day and realise he doesn't want to lose her. And so he does what she'd never thought he'd do. He introduces her at a party as his 'girlfriend'. He plans a trip with her to Paris for the summer (which is four months away), and doesn't hesitate to invite her to his

father's birthday dinner party, with thirty of his closest family members.

#77. WONDER WOMAN LETS A MAN BE HIMSELF:

She accepts his flaws, his foibles and doesn't try to change him or to restrict him in any way. DON'T BE THAT NEEDY GIRL!

If he's the right guy for you, there'll be a natural progression from fling to relationship, as long as you play your Wonder Woman cards right. But utter that infamous sentence beseeching him to tell you where it's all heading and you could run the risk of making him run a mile.

Don't say 'I love you'

Ah, those three magic words. Forget about how to lose a guy in ten days; if you really want to see a result, then just say the 'L' word and he'll be out your door faster than a Roger Federer forehand. Especially if he hasn't said it to you first.

The theory is simple, ladies. Don't ever forget that all blokes are cavemen at heart. Anything that threatens their freedom, their thriving sex life or their never-ending quest for the 'thrill of the hunt' will be rapidly shoved aside. If you bring the 'L' card into play

too soon, you're bursting his caveman bubble—suddenly you're no longer worth chasing, dating, shagging, or bringing home to Mum.

#78. NEVER UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES UTTER THE 'L' WORD BEFORE HE'S SAID IT TO YOU:

This threatens his freedom, makes him think you want to rush him, and that you're just one of those desperate girls gagging to get hitched. WAIT FOR HIM TO SAY IT—even if it takes years. (I'm SERIOUS!)

Saying the 'L' word when he's barely mentioned your name to his mates, let alone traded in Saturday night footy for a romantic evening with you, is enough to ensure the union is over for good.

Saying it first also means you risk personal humiliation. Do you really want to experience the quizzical stare, the nonchalant 'er . . . thanks', or worse—have him explain to you that he's enjoying the no-strings-attached casual liaison way too much to shift gears into mushy couple territory? 'Why ruin a good thing?' he'll say as your heart crumbles into a million pieces and you wish the ground would swallow you whole. By this time I'm guessing you'll be wanting to press the backspace button on your mouth. No such luck.

Before you even *think* about saying 'I love you',

you need some signs that he's in love with you. Here are a few:

- Invite him to your parents' place on the day of an important footy game and see if he shows up.
- He remembers your birthday.
- He's nice to your friends.
- He smiles when you walk through the door.
- He gazes at you lovingly when you're out in public.

But stop placing so much emphasis on the 'L' word. As I've said many, many times: never listen to what a man says. Always go by his actions. They speak a whole lot louder.

How to get him to commit to more than dinner plans

When there's no sign of the two of you ever settling down together, something drastic needs to be done.

I've never heard a man lament that he is searching for 'a relationship'. Or that he wants to delay the sex to see if he's really that into a woman. Or that he so desperately wants kids that he's prepared to 'settle' with the next half-decent lady that crosses his path. (Wouldn't that be music to some women's ears?) So it has me mightily flummoxed when I hear of some femmes demanding a man commit, or at least admit he's the marrying type, when they haven't even reached the second date!

Male excuses for avoiding commitment run rampant and ridiculous. Johnny Depp claims he doesn't want to ruin his girlfriend's last name; Brad Pitt famously said he'll only get married 'when everyone else in the country who wants to be married is legally able'; George Clooney says he's just 'no good at it'; and my mate Ken says he'll 'ruin the relationship' with a wedding. He's been with his girlfriend for eight years.

Luckily, for those desperate to tie the knot, a bunch of smart folks from Rutgers University in New Jersey have made it their mission to discover the truth behind commitment-snubbing.[16] Apparently it all boils down to this: men believe they can get all the benefits of commitment without all the dreary obligations.

That's right, ladies; our mothers may have been right all along when they warned us against giving up too much too soon. 'Why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free?' as the charming expression goes.

#79. WHY MEN WON'T COMMIT:

Men have a GAZILLION reasons for refusing to commit, none of which are because he doesn't love you enough to get hitched. Hence you need to PROVE TO HIM that you won't stifle his lifestyle, his freedom or stop having sex with him.

The number one reason that men stay single? Because—surprise, surprise—they can get sex without marriage more easily than ever before. Men can get some bedroom action without even paying for dinner, and bonk buddies are fast becoming a single man's best friend. Most men say that they view the women they meet in bars and at dance clubs as casual sex partners rather than 'marriage material'. As one colleague of mine sniffed: 'I go to bars to meet a certain type of woman. If I want a relationship, I'll go for someone I work with or someone I meet through friends.'

According to bachelor Carl Weisman, author of *So Why Have You Never Been Married? 10 Insights Into Why He Hasn't Wed*, these are the reasons why modern men won't commit:

- They can get sex without marriage more easily than in times past.
- They can enjoy the benefits of having a wife by cohabiting rather than marrying.
- They want to avoid divorce and its financial risks.
- They want to wait until they are older to have children.
- They fear that marriage will require too many changes and compromises.
- They are waiting for the perfect soul mate and she hasn't yet appeared.
- They face few social pressures to marry.

- They are reluctant to marry a woman who already has children.
- They want to own a house before they get a wife.
- They want to enjoy single life as long as they can.

From the Male Room

'Unlike many women, men don't look at what they want to get out of life and answer "get married and have children". Women incorrectly put the cart before the horse. Find the right guy and then think about children . . .Until then, the desire for children shouldn't be discussed or on your radar. For men, these thoughts don't begin to occur as life goals until they meet someone special or infatuating enough to raise the blood levels. Even then, men's instinct warns them away from commitment too soon and for too long. For men, nesting and homemaking is soul destroying and emasculating . . .There are bridges to build, rivers to cross, trips to the moon to organise . . .'
—Halberstram

'I, for one, am only too happy to commit for the right lady. But it seems I am just never good enough. Don't have the right job, don't earn enough money, don't drive the right car, don't hang out with the right people etc. I think most times women's expectations are much too high. We can't all be millionaire CEOs. I need

to get a date first before I can commit to anyone.' —**Trueblue**

'These days, the question is why would a bloke settle for any particular cow when most of the herd is giving away the milk for free. I'm in my mid-thirties and here is a scenario I see often in my age group. You meet a woman in her mid-thirties. Her biological clock is ticking and she wants to have kids. (And there are a lot of women like this.) Although you've only known each other for a little while she wants to settle down and have kids almost immediately. The chances of divorce are high because you've rushed into it and haven't taken a long time to get to know each other. But that's okay—if you break up she'll take 60 per cent of your assets and you can pay her a regular child support allowance for the next fifteen years. And if you want to see your kids on a regular basis then she'll choose what city you'll be living in for the rest of your active life. What man could resist an offer like that? Must be a commitment phobe!'—**Rufus**

'Yes, I admit it (I was forced to under pain of torture), I am probably a commitment phobe. Sorry, girls!' —**John P**

'I've paid off my house single-handedly—so why would I want to give it away to a woman who just decides one day to up and out of the marriage?

Plus—a man who has been financially ruined with a divorce settlement and child support payments is then regarded as "damaged goods" by further prospective partners. No, thanks! The golden-egg-laying goose has long since been killed off, because a cost-benefit analysis shows modern marriage to not be worth the risk for men. And there's no bigger turn-off to me than the "ticking biological clock", because I don't want kids either—ever.'—**David**

Sam's foolproof tips on how to get a man to commit

- Never use the words 'commitment', 'boyfriend', 'ex-boyfriend', 'marriage', 'kids' or mention anything about the future in the first THREE MONTHS of dating him. Even after those first three months have passed, make sure he brings those topics up first, and when he asks you how you feel about marriage, kids or moving in together, simply shrug and say that you haven't really considered it yet, but if it's something he's into then you'll think about it. He'll be so used to women behaving in the opposite manner that you'll knock him off his feet and he'll probably beg you to commit!
- Never gush over other people's weddings, kids or lovey-dovey-ness in his presence. This will make him think that you're so into weddings and

commitment that it doesn't really matter who the man is, as long as you're getting your dream white wedding. This puts a man off so fast you'll think you're yesterday's takeout!

- Never openly complain about his behaviour. Instead, try saying something like, 'I'd really like it if you spoke to my friends more—they hardly know you and I'd love them to see how much of a cool guy you are.' Be positive.
- Have your own life OUTSIDE your relationship. Show him you're not always available when he calls you, and don't get annoyed when he goes out with his mates, doesn't call you and comes home at extremely odd hours. Simply do the same thing when he least expects it—and leave your phone at home so you're not tempted to pick it up. Chances are he'll be a whole lot more respectful of you next time!

And if he still refuses to commit? Don't fret. As the age-old proverb goes: 'When a man repeats a promise again and again, he means to fail you anyway.'

Moving in together—are the odds against you?

Thinking of moving in together before you get hitched? Well, why not? After all, it'll give you a chance to find out ahead of time what it's like to sleep in the same

bed with him night after night, share the bathroom, deal with his mood swings, fight over who had the last drop of milk and so on. On the upside, it'll be cheaper, you'll halve the laundry load and there'll be someone else to do the dishes at night. What's not to love about it?

'It's absolutely necessary to live with someone before marriage,' many of my friends in their late twenties and early thirties replied when I posed the question to them during my research. 'How can you not?' they went on. 'It's like buying a car without a test drive, or a pair of shoes without trying them on.'

German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche believed we should all 'live dangerously' if we want to reap the greatest enjoyment and fruitfulness from life, but moving in with someone is a whole different ball game from going bungy jumping, entering *Australian Idol* or taking a peek at a picture of Britney Spears sans her underwear. Sure, for many women, being asked to move into a new partner's luxurious abode with park views, two bathrooms and a trained chihuahua would make them as excited as a kid in a candy store. But the initial rush doesn't last. Nor does living together translate into a better relationship. Or even a lasting relationship.

Before you complain that it's 2010 and those ancient 'living-in-sin' rules no longer apply, let me just say that I've worked hard to find some research that puts a positive spin on shacking up without the ring, but sadly, ladies, it's just not the case.

#80. DON'T SHACK UP!

A Columbia University study found there's actually less chance of marrying a person when you live with them, with only 26 per cent of women and a scant 19 per cent of the men surveyed marrying the person they cohabited with.

Introducing the modern peril of serial monogamy

So, you didn't take my advice and you live with someone for a few months or even years. Then, when things don't go your way, instead of working at the relationship, like say, a married couple might—you simply pack up your things and move in with the next person. Ouch. If you thought shacking up before the big commitment would improve your chances, think again. As I said, the survey showed that partners who live together before marriage are nine times more likely to split up than those who get married.[17]

Author and relationship expert Laura Schlessinger backs up the stats. She cites 'shacking up with your honey' as one of the 'ten stupid things women do to mess up their lives' in her book of the same name.[18]

And if that's not enough to convince you that living together before marriage may not be such a great

idea, those same surveys found that couples who live together before marriage don't have the best sex. I'm not sure I believe that one but it's enough to scare off any man!

#81. CHASE TIP:

If you want a man to respect you, get and keep your OWN place. Even if he begs you to move in. Keep your place on the side. At least until you get that ring!

11

Advanced bedroom skills: How to keep the sex hot and steamy

Sex relieves tension, love causes it.

Woody Allen

Love is a matter of chemistry, but sex is a matter of physics.

Unknown

Mistakes women make in the bedroom

It's a universally acknowledged truth that when a group of women gets together and overpriced champagne is thrown into the mix, confessions are made. Especially when it comes to sex.

'I had sex last night' is how the conversation begins, and then the stories start to flow. There's sex in the shower resulting in a broken collarbone; sex with the yoga instructor in the lotus position, and men who can't get it up after claiming they got a hair stuck in their throat. There's been drunken sex, sober sex, office sex and booty-call sex.

And then, after the women have downed a few peach bellinis, the conversation turns to the lessons, because every girl has her tricks: how to go down on him without gagging (relax your throat, breathe in and out and remember to continually swallow); how to get him to go down on you for hours (use a feminine hygiene product called Vagisil Foaming Wash, subtly shove his head in that direction and make noises of encouragement); how to fake an orgasm to boost his ego; and how to boost his ego without having to fake an orgasm.

Yet despite all the intricacies of various positions and praying that you don't fart during sex, this is not where the contention lies. Oh, no. Never once (okay,

#82. SEX IS FUN:

As long as there's laughter involved and you're truly in the moment the sex will be good regardless of your technique. Confidence is key!

maybe only once), in the five years I've been writing my dating column have readers of either sex written in to ask me how to have sex in the jacuzzi in the 'wheelbarrow' position while hitting the G-spot without dislocating their knee. Two people hot for each other can figure these things out on their own. And if not, there's always porn to teach them. No, the topic that most comes up is the confusion between what women think men want in the bedroom and what they really want or think but don't dare articulate.

A very savvy woman called Tweekerchick has put together one of the most honest and open appraisals on female bedroom shortcomings I've ever seen. When I asked if she would be a part of this book, Tweekerchick allowed me to pick out some tips from her top-fifty list of the worst mistakes women make when having sex (see Tweekerchick.blogspot.com for the full list).

Oh, and just in case you're wondering, I did indeed run these by the blokes in the Male Room.

Mistakes women make when having sex

(from tweekerchick.blogspot.com)

- Assuming he can get a raging hard-on when it suits you. Contrary to popular belief, men can't just flip a switch and get it up because you decided you want to get some action. Getting him hard is your job. Figure it out.
- Leaving him responsible for your orgasm. You know what gets you off. Tell him. If you don't, it's your own fault when he's snoozing and you're all wound up.
- Expecting him to cuddle. Men and women are wired differently. Sex makes most women want to talk and bond. It makes men pass out. It's a biological thing. Stop fighting it, and stop holding it over his head—it's not his fault.
- Expecting him to fall asleep with you in his arms. It gets uncomfortable after a while. A little snuggling isn't unreasonable, but when it's time to actually sleep? An arm draped over you should suffice.
- Expecting him to always lay on the charm and romance. Sometimes that's nice. Sometimes. But expecting him to be all roses and candles all the time is like expecting you to act like a porn star all the time. If you're not willing to do that, don't expect him to switch for you.
- Being selfish in bed. Regardless of what glossy

magazines force down your throat, sex is NOT just about you. Get over it.

- Whining when he pushes your head down to his nether region instead of stroking your hair. Know why he's pushing, skippy? Because you aren't doing it right, and have apparently ignored the other clues he's given you. Pay attention to the signals that he's sending you.
- Not moving at all. Missionary is not an excuse to do nothing.
- Expecting him to undress himself with any amount of grace. He's about to get lucky.
- Be glad he bothered to take his pants all the way off. If it concerns you so much, undress him yourself.
- Not shaving your legs. If you want your guy stubble free, you'd better get out the razor.
- Allowing your crotch to resemble the Amazon. Yes, waxing hurts. Yes, some people don't want to go bare. That's fine. If you like bush, great. If you have sensitive skin and can't shave, I feel for you. But for the love of Christ, trim if you want him to spend any time down there.
- Assuming that sex means a relationship. The only relationship you have is that he has now stuck his hoo hoo dilly in your cha cha. That's as far as it goes unless otherwise noted.
- Expecting him to figure out what you like by what noise you make. Use your words. Have you ever

actually heard what you sound like while you're having sex? If you heard yourself on tape, and someone asked you to explain what was causing you to make that noise, 67 per cent of women would respond with answers like 'I stubbed my toe' or 'I ran up the steps'.

- Leaving condoms up to him. If you're sexually active and insist that he uses a condom, I suggest buying a box and keeping it by your bed. Not all men keep them on them, and it's just as much your responsibility as it is his. If you think that makes you a slut, you shouldn't be having sex anyway. Go back to Junior High.
- Refusing to be spontaneous. I know this is shocking, but sometimes sex OUTSIDE of the bedroom is fun.
- Dissing quickies because it's not some slow, sensual ordeal. Sex is a dynamic thing. There's an awesome raw energy when you only have twenty minutes but having to have someone so bad that you do it half-clothed against the wall. Readjust your thinking.
- Expecting him to undress you. I put a bra on almost every day. I know for a fact that getting them off isn't always easy. Help a brother out.
- Refusing to get on top. There's no reason men should have to do all the work.
- Getting that bored look on your face. Men are more visual than women. Give him something to

look at. Get on top and arch your back a little bit. Move. Do something to indicate that 1) you are not dead, and 2) you didn't suffer a minor stroke rendering you unable to move.

- Refusing to let him take control. So you're a feminist. Big fucking deal. Letting him call the shots doesn't make you any less of one.
- Forgetting that he has a body that likes to be touched too. Men have things like backs and shoulders and stomachs and other parts that are fun to kiss and touch. You miss a lot of good places by concentrating solely on his penis.
- Ignoring his balls. Seriously, they are there. Kiss them, lick them, suck on them, make a relationship with them, just don't ignore them.
- Faking orgasms. Just. Don't. By faking (IF he believes you) you make him think he's doing everything right. And if he doesn't know it's not working, he's not going to change it, starting a cycle of unfulfilling sex which will eventually be very damaging to his ego.
- Refusing to use oils/whipped cream/other messy but fun things because you have 541510630 thread count Egyptian cotton sheets that were made by hand by the only person alive capable of sewing that pattern. They'll wash.
- Making a big deal out of it if he loses his hard-on. This is not an interrogation or game of Twenty Questions. It happens, he's probably mortified and

you are NOT helping. Refrain from using phrases like 'It happens to every guy'. Just move to other activities until it gets hard again, and if it doesn't, get off another way with him. He's still capable of getting you off. Mumbling 'Forget it' and rolling over are not okay responses.

- Asking questions right afterwards. The female equivalent of 'Was it good for you?' Now is not a good time to ask 'what this means'. Right now, it means he probably needs to take a drink, a leak and a nap, perhaps not in that order.

Ooh, baby! Secrets of the Big O

'I don't like to have sex,' was something Bettina, a beauty therapist, once disclosed to me. When I tactfully investigated as to why she didn't like what is arguably one of the greatest experiences known to humanity, she admitted that she'd never actually had an orgasm. 'I don't know how it feels,' she said. And this from a woman who'd been dating an eligible, well-endowed bachelor for quite some time. No wonder she was avoiding bedroom shenanigans like the plague.

The sad truth is, she's not alone. A staggering 75 per cent of women sometimes or never experience an orgasm during sex.[19] That's right, ladies—three quarters of the female population. It's like watching the film *The Sixth Sense* without getting to see the ending, eating at a world-class Italian restaurant and not having

the dessert, or buying a pair of heels and never wearing them out. It's simply not fair!

The female brain

Some common reasons women give for not being able to orgasm include the environment isn't right, they're not in the mood, or they aren't able to fully allow themselves to lose control in order to get off. We worry about our bodies, smells, flab on our stomachs and tuckshop arms that might be a turn-off to the man we're about to let us see naked. Not to mention that we might be tired, stressed out or would simply prefer to watch a re-run of *Lipstick Jungle* than have to grunt and groan in faux-pleasure for the next ten minutes. Especially since it takes, on average, a staggering twenty minutes of direct stimulation for a woman to orgasm, while it takes a man a measly two to five minutes!

While feminist writer Fay Weldon advised women to 'fake it' so men didn't 'become anxious and so less able to perform', I feel there are other, more practical solutions the the Big-O conundrum.

#83. SEX TIP:

You'll never have to fake an orgasm if you get the mental stimulation there first. Women are turned on by their brains, so talk about what you'd like to do BEFORE you get to the bedroom. Surprisingly, this little trick works wonders!

Teasing talk

The trick here is to get your mind in the right head space. Talk to your partner about something sexual outside of the bedroom.

#84. WAX YOUR BITS:

Get a Brazilian bikini wax and tell him about it. Not only will you feel sexier, he'll sense your pheromones heating up and get turned on too!

Let him know you're not wearing any underwear at the dinner table. Tell him how great he was in bed the other night. Not only will his ears prick up, but your juices will start flowing before you've even touched.

Discover your personal orgasm triggers

For many women, an orgasm doesn't usually eventuate from penetrative sex, no matter how adventurous you get after reading the *Kama Sutra*.

#85. VIBRATOR ALERT:

Your man needs to know that he has to pay attention to your clitoris or G-spot, and stimulate you manually, orally and perhaps even with a vibrator if you actually want to come.

You also need to do a bit of the work. Try breathing slowly and deeply, arching your back to maximise clitoral stimulation and squeezing your pelvic floor muscles to activate your pleasure muscles. Some women find that escaping into a fantasy world helps to alleviate much of the stress they can associate with sex. Imagine you're at your favourite exotic destination, or that your man is Brad Pitt's character in the movie *Troy* and his sole mission in life is to pleasure you.

Porn isn't all bad

If you're looking to add to your sexual experience, porn isn't actually a bad idea—if it's done right. The key here is to remember that it's all about *your* experience, so you'll need to pick out some female-friendly porn that will turn you on as much as it will him. Try something like Candida Royalle's videos,[20] which, unlike most of the stuff on the internet, are specifically designed for couples with the focus on pleasuring women.

#86. SEX TIP:

FEMALE-FRIENDLY PORN is the ultimate way to improve your sex life. Watch it together, or alone and learn a few things along the way. Forget girly magazines and go for the real thing! Your man will be pleasantly surprised. NB** Not to be used for the purpose of one-night stands.

Multiple orgasms

The good news for women is that, unlike men, we have the ability to orgasm more than once during the same sexual experience, otherwise known as the 'multiple orgasm'. Women don't require a recovery time after an orgasm like men do, which means that once you've had one orgasm you can have another one within a matter of minutes! Try it!

What they didn't teach you in sex ed

Sex can be female-friendly. You just need to do a little research . . . and a whole lot of practice.

Jasmine emailed me complaining bitterly that her sex life had about as much spark as a box of wet matches. She'd been dating the same dude for over two years and things in the bedroom had hit a sexual plateau. She was an extremely sexual person and yet, despite doing it regularly, they hadn't progressed past what she termed the 'vanilla variety'—straight-down-the-line missionary sex with little experimentation. She begged me for a strategy on how to broach the topic with her man without coming across like a sex-crazed floozy. Reading her email, I was struck by the realisation that men probably have no idea that women too secretly crave wild, wanton sex complete with filthy words and fantasies. But most women don't dare to

tell, for fear her man will think she's a slutty, spanking-crazed nymphomaniac.

The trouble is that unless you're a professional porn star, no matter how many times you pray to the sexual gods, your man isn't going to turn up to the bedroom in a spiky dog collar with a vibrating dildo in his hand asking you how many times you'd like him to go down on you unless you tell him that's exactly what you want. So, if you really want to spice things up in the bedroom, the kinky ball needs to be in *your* court.

Non-cheesy tips for improving your sex life

- Buy your man a copy of *The Joy of Sex* or the *Kama Sutra* and peruse it together. Remember, you're looking specifically for scintillating new positions that will stimulate your G-spot. Explain to your man that these positions will give you a better chance at having an orgasm. Immediately his ears (and other areas) will tingle with anticipation and before you know it the missionary position will be a thing of the past!
- Hire a film that you know has a killer sex scene (*Wild Things* and *Basic Instinct* are a good start) and casually ask your boyfriend if he'd ever like to try something like what he's witnessing on the screen. Tell him that the woman in the movie looks like she's getting an immense amount of pleasure from the sex and you'd like to try it out and see if it works for you too.

#87. NEW BEDROOM RULE:

You're not allowed to have sex in the same position more than once a week. And get practising.

- Don't be shy—suggest some of your own fantasies. They can be anything from keeping the lights on during sex, to dressing up as Russian spies, to her doing a striptease routine, to tying him up with a pair of her stockings. Just remember to keep it safe, painless and for his benefit too. Beyond these simple rules, let your imagination run wild! (Oh, and be prepared. As one keen male experimenter recently confessed: 'No-one likes to be left tied up for hours while your partner rummages around the house trying to find a pair of scissors. It hurts!')

The illusory G-spot

Fact alert! Life has many enigmas. But one that has confused women the world over—even more than Sarah Palin's views on foreign policy—is the illusory G-spot—the mysterious female body part rumoured to produce a feeling of euphoria unlike any other. Some say there's no such thing, that it's just a myth created by women to make men feel inadequate for being unable to find it. Others reckon it's as real as Heidi Klum's breasts and that there are thousands of women who have been lucky enough to experience the G-spot orgasm.

Before we work out how to find it, let me tell you a bit about how the whole notion of the G-spot first came about.

A quarter of a century ago, an American researcher by the name of Beverly Whipple challenged the conclusion that some women lacked a G-spot. Unlike other researchers who had gleaned information on Americans' sex habits and preferences from face-to-face interviews or large anonymous surveys, Whipple and her team worked in a laboratory, doing studies on female volunteers to learn how the sexual organs, nerves and brain interact. Early on, Whipple and a colleague, psychologist John D. Perry, discovered their volunteers had a mysterious sensual area inside the vagina. Researching medical literature, they found that Dr Ernst Grafenberg of Germany had reported in 1950 that women had an internal erogeneous zone that, when stimulated, caused orgasm. Whipple and Perry named it the Grafenberg spot, or G-spot, and created a stir when they reported on it at a medical conference and in their 1982 book, *The G Spot and Other Discoveries About Human Sexuality*.[21]

#88. SEX TIP:

Certain positions will help hit the G-spot more so than others. Do your research, have a whiz around Google and *The Art of Sex* and do yourself a favour—train your man to find the goddamn thing!

Whipple's research has shown that all women describe some degree of sensitivity in the area, about a third of the way up the vagina, and that it needs to be stimulated through means other than just intercourse.

Going Tantric: The science of ecstasy

P. Diddy says it gives him thirty hours of pleasure; Sting swears it saved his marriage; and Scarlett Johansson allegedly dabbled in it with ex-beau Josh Hartnett. I am, of course, talking about Tantra: the 5000-year-old practice that promises to improve your sex life by combining spirituality with sexuality. When *Cosmopolitan* magazine asked me to do a feature story on the supposed 'science of ecstasy', I was eager to find out more.

Diane Riley, co-founder of the Australian School of Tantra, explained to me that the focus of Tantra isn't on the actual orgasm but on breathing and connecting instead. 'It's about making love, not getting off,' she said.

#89. SEX TIP:

Don't be afraid to take a Tantric course with your partner. If you don't learn anything, at least it will all be for a bit of a laugh. And you can always suggest practising more at home.

My session began with Tantric guru Michelle, who explained that to get into the Tantric zone you have to

sit opposite your date or partner and breathe loudly and deeply together. The next step is to move your hands onto each other's 'sex centre' before going into the infamous Tantric Yab-Yum position. This is where the bloke sits cross-legged with his partner sitting on top, facing him, with her legs wrapped around his waist; and the deep breathing and eye contact continues. I have to say, all this seemed very non-erotic to me. Michelle went on to the secrets of Tantric massage, which, she said, were guaranteed to make his 'wand of light' (penis) feel three feet long and lead to multiple orgasms later on. I watched her demonstrate some strokes on a plastic model but it was a little confusing and I was glad to be given an instruction sheet to take home.

After all that breathing, prodding, touching and alleged multi-orgasmic sex, neither partner is allowed to roll over for a snooze. Instead, we're supposed to share with each other what parts we enjoyed.

I was delighted to move on to the sensual massage part of the treatment. I slipped off my clothes, tied on the mandatory sarong and was led to a dimly lit room filled with candles and sensual music. Chris, an expert in Tantric massage, gets me to stand up in front of him and breathe deeply with my eyes closed while he tickled my body with feathers and fur gloves. He told me to focus my energy upwards from my pelvis and into my chest to make me more present and 'in the moment'; apparently many people have sex while thinking of a million other things. Then he asked me

to lie on the bed, where he got rid of all the tension in my neck.

I emerged from the massage feeling slightly tingly, and learned that the follow-up sessions would involve more focus on the yoni (vagina), which Chris says promotes sexual enlightenment and empowerment (and possibly a few orgasms along the way).

#90. SEX TIP:

Massage is a fail-proof method of turning both you and your partner on. Learn the art of it and remember that practice makes perfect.

Back home I'm too tired to spend the extra ten minutes before bed focusing on breathing in unison with my partner and we fall asleep before I can get even a glimpse of who got booted off *Australian Idol*. Maybe all that slow breathing is best reserved for the weekends . . .

A Cautionary Tale: Jane

'Here's to Jane and Duncan! Proof that true love can really be right under your nose and you'd never ever know it!'

It was Jane and Duncan's engagement party and Poppy had just finished her maid-of-honour speech. She stepped down from the platform and waddled over to the dessert table, clutching her pregnant belly. She dished herself up a little of each flavour of ice-cream—her newfound food obsession. Now that her modelling career was over (at least for now), she'd allowed herself to finally taste the stuff. And God, she loved it so much. She was eating ice-cream for breakfast, lunch and dinner. At least the calcium would be good for the baby.

Poppy's life had done a complete 360. She'd taken off her party hat. She'd deleted all the club bouncers from her speed dial. She'd even given away some of her slinkiest shoes to make room in her closet for all the baby gear. Even though she was doing it all on her own, she truly believed this baby was a blessing; something that was going to save her from herself. She looked at Jane and Duncan—so deliriously happy—and she knew there was hope. There was hope for them all . . .

Jane and Duncan stood holding hands at the entrance into their newly purchased three-bedroom house in the Hills, where the engagement party was taking place. There wasn't a dry eye in the room. Jane looked at the massive rock on her finger and sighed with happiness. Everything had worked out, thank God. Duncan had carried out the perfect proposal.

Midway through the plane ride to her surprise weekend, one of the stewards had invited Jane to the cockpit. Duncan was in the bathroom and so Jane had gone alone. When she entered the cockpit, she almost fell over. There was Duncan, with one knee on the ground, clutching an open box with the most beautiful ring she'd ever seen in her life.

'This is a bit embarrassing,' he'd told her. 'So you'd better not reject me.'

Tears started to stream down Jane's face. Oh my God, it's happening, *she thought*. It's really happening.

Duncan took hold of the intercom microphone and began to speak, his words heard by the entire plane. 'Jane, I've loved you ever since the moment our chapsticked lips locked behind the gym all those years ago. I never forgot about you, Janey. And I've been holding out for you ever since. Jane . . . will you marry me?'

The entire plane fell silent. Duncan held the microphone towards Jane.

'Yes! Yes! Of course I will,' Jane said, leaping forward to kiss Duncan.

*The passengers erupted into cheers. The air stewards threw streamers in the air. (*Streamers? *Jane thought*. Was this all pre-planned?*)*

'Champagne for everyone!' Duncan announced, and the stewards began popping bottles.

As Jane and Duncan walked back to their seats, they felt like rock stars. Everyone was congratulating Jane and high-fiving Duncan. It was the best moment of her entire life so far . . .

When they got back to their seats, Duncan had whispered into her ear, 'You're my Wonder Woman, Janey. You're "the one". And don't you ever forget it.'

There was a single red rose waiting for her on her seat.

12

Staying on track: How to make your relationship work

Every time you date someone with an issue that you have to work to ignore, you're settling.

Anon

Girls we love for what they are; men for what they promise to be.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

How to NOT get him to propose

If you ever want to see that ring, then ultimatums, traps and coercion are definitely not the way to go. While the film *He's Not That Into You* makes the brilliant point that 'if you date a girl too long and don't marry her you're a jerk', it also informs women of the consequences of the ultimatum tactic. Ben (played by Bradley Cooper), who only marries after his girlfriend forced him into it with an ultimatum, ends up lying and cheating throughout the marriage. And when he realises he was actually tricked into the marriage, it ends. Ladies, I don't care what you read in magazines or see on TV, the sad news is that trapping a man into marriage simply doesn't work in the long run.

#91. NO ULTIMATUM RULE:

NEVER give a man an ultimatum to marry you. It never works and you'll only lose him for good.

My 36-year-old accountant friend Kendra felt like it was time to give her man an ultimatum after seven years together without so much as a hint that one day she might walk down the aisle as the bride not a bridesmaid.

'Why hasn't he proposed?' she sniffed on the phone to me one afternoon. 'Is there something wrong with me? It's been seven years!'

Feeling left on the shelf while you're actually in a relationship is tough. Maybe your bloke has valid reasons for not popping the question; but open up any gossip magazine and you can't help but feel left out of the mad rush to get a bit of bling on your wedding finger. Marriage proposals are ricocheting through Hollywood faster than Michael Schumacher's Ferrari. (Even Pamela Anderson tied the knot with the same man for the third time!)

Signs that he's never going to propose

- He refuses to talk about the topic, blaming his divorce, his ex-wife and his current financial situation.
- He acts likes he's still single even though you've been together a few years.
- He turns up his nose at every wedding the two of you have to attend together, and always introduces you as his 'friend' rather than his girlfriend or partner.

Good reasons to ask him about marriage

- When you've been dating for three to four years and you want to know where he wants this to go. Tell him that you're not particularly fussed about marriage, but you're interested in his point of view on the subject.

- You're pregnant and would prefer to be married when you have the baby.

Bad reasons to ask him about marriage

- All your friends are tying the knot and you're jealous.
- You've found the perfect white dress but don't have an occasion to wear it.
- You think your biological clock is ticking and you want to settle down.
- You've just moved in together.

#92. HE'S GOT THE MILK:

Once you're living together, remember, he has the milk for free so he won't be buying the cow. At least not for a long time. Don't do it if you want to get married!

From the Male Room

'A guy will propose when he is ready and when there has been a "trial period"—long enough to satisfy himself that the woman doesn't use sex as a bargaining tool, won't get lazy and complacent and blimp up, and when he is sure that the woman is in it for the long haul not just something to do for fun for as long as it suits her. You get what you put in.'—**Bender**

'I got the ultimatum once after two and a half months. My response: "You're kidding right?" She didn't appreciate it, but then again neither did I the question. We ended less than a month later.' **—Jonk**

'Men HATE being manipulated. The words "manipulated" and "emasculated" sound and feel very much alike to a man and we get them confused. So when the man finally realises he's been manipulated he either dumps the woman who manipulated him or accepts the emasculation that comes with the manipulation. Neither option is any fun for a man, but dumping the manipulating woman at least lets him feel like he has some personal pride left, while accepting emasculation just drives home the fact that he is "whipped" and she is in charge. And ladies, sex will never be good enough for long enough to make a man accept emasculation.'—**Barry**

13

Other things men want you to know

Men are good in one way, but bad in many.

Aristotle

God gave men a brain and a penis, but only enough blood to run one at a time.

Robin Williams

Why do men ogle women?

Some of the most common questions that women ask about men are: Why do men ogle? Why do men wolf-whistle at anything with two legs? The answer is quite simple really. Men are visual creatures. Ogling is in their nature. As Germaine Greer once sniffed: 'Men prefer looks to brains because they see better than they think.'

Brain researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital concur. When they showed a bunch of photos of ridiculously good-looking women to a group of men while monitoring their brain activity, they discovered that the images switched on the same parts of the male brain that is switched on by money and by cocaine![22] Even the male fondness for big breasts is biological (or so male scientists claim) because, biologically, big boobs promise good nutrition for future offspring.

Of course, women can appreciate David Beckham's abs, Brad Pitt's face or the biceps of the cute guy who makes us coffee every morning; but a woman is unlikely to shout out obscenities at passing gents, or openly rate men walking past their café table from one to ten. (Interestingly, one survey on seduction found that women aren't as attracted to good-looking men because they're worried they will 'impregnate and leave' them. Instead, women are looking for a man with father potential who will have the 'tendency to stick around'.)[23]

It's unlikely you're ever going to stop your man from ogling (apparently men spend a whopping six months out of their lives checking out other women) but you can choose how to deal with it. Recently I was out with a gorgeous-looking female friend and her boyfriend and both of us caught him staring at another woman walking by. I was surprised and mightily impressed when she just laughed it off. Later, she shared this little gem of advice with me: 'Even though he has the Porsche, it doesn't mean he can't look at the Ferrari.' With this attitude, she has no trouble with her man at all.

Don't get upset when your man starts to look at other women in front of you. It's in their nature! The minute you start to whine and nag and pull him up on it, you will make him feel stifled, insecure and unhappy. Let him look . . . he's not looking to buy!

From the Male Room

'Okay . . . let's get things straight! Real men do not ogle women's shoes, nor do they admire women for their multitudes of designer clothes or make-up collection. Yes, there are some men that do admire women for having great calves or a nice cleavage but this doesn't translate straightaway into wanting to see you naked. A hint of flesh is the easiest way to get a guy's attention, whether it be an extra button undone on your top

or showing a bit of shoulder now and again. Ogling can be quite fun. As long as we don't obviously stare at her boobs.'—**Paddy**

'I have always found that women are just as bad as guys, they just hide it better.'—**Greentinge**

'There is absolutely nothing on a dreary, monotonous day better than spying a gorgeous woman walking down the street. The whole day can suck, but even a short glimpse of that one woman can trigger all the happy circuits in my brain.'—**P**

Why do men look at porn?

'When a man's in a relationship, why does he still need to look at porno magazines?' one reader, Tracey asked me. It's a question on the lips of many women the world over who say that finding out their man looks at porn gives them chills rather than thrills. The fact is, a staggering 70 per cent of men aged 18–34 view porn on the internet once a month.[24] (Although many men suggest the statistics are closer to once a day!) While most women would prefer to believe their man would never watch porn (and are completely flabbergasted when they find his hidden stash under the bed or in the linen cupboard), the fact is men are visual creatures. Unlike us, they have an insatiable

#93. MEN AND PORN:

ALL men look at porn. That's right ladies, ALL men. The sooner you get your head around that, the better. It's not something you should take offence to, or even get upset about. Again, he is not looking to date these women!

appetite for looking at naked bodies on their television or computer screen.

But don't think that watching porn has anything to do with your man thinking your sex life together is dreary or that your backside is too fat to turn him on. Oh no. The men I spoke to claim they look at porn for reasons unconnected to their partner.

Reason 1: Sex ed

Everything that men never learned in sex ed classes, lads' mags, their older brothers or their more experienced mates, they learn from watching porn. They learn what sex is meant to look like, how to do it properly, which positions look best in the mirror, where to touch women and what exactly to do with their equipment.

#94. MAN PORN FACT:

Most of the time they won't attempt to try out what they see, although very occasionally you'll hear a woman complain that her man wanted to attempt the 'tossing the salad', 'butt rodeo' or 'cajun hot stick' positions. But if it gives a guy confidence in the bedroom and he's doing it to please us, then what's to complain about?

Reason 2: Sex on the brain

With sex on their brain most of the day (you have to wonder how men get any work done), watching porn can relieve all that built-up sexual tension. Men are biologically programmed to respond to two (or three or four) people having sex, and the act of watching it is so normal to them they'll even swap DVDs with their mates, just like women swap chicken recipes and chick-lit novels.

Reason 3: Sexual motivation

One of my work colleagues, Ben, explained to me that men sometimes watch porn to become more sexually motivated when the relationship has gotten a little stale. 'After the initial sexual spark is gone, looking at porn is a way to get the guy excited and interested again. We're not daydreaming about other women—we're there to make our own relationship improve!'

That can work in two ways, of course. It can either spice up the relationship or act as a replacement for needs that aren't being met. As Ben observes: 'If your own sex life is inadequate and your partner is constantly watching porn instead of paying attention to you, then you know there's a bigger problem. It's to do with the connection between the two people.'

My best advice to all women? Allow your man to feel at ease about watching a little onscreen action, no matter how much you abhor the thought (or sound) of it. Because as the men I polled fervently declared: the more they're told they can't have it, the more they want it!

#95. WITHHOLDING SEX:

I know you think it might be in your power to withhold sex from a man, but by doing so you're pushing him further and further away, and possibly into the arms of another woman. Don't risk it. To men, sex is their way of showing love (when they're in a long-term committed relationship). It makes them feel masculine and manly and loving and helps them want to be a better partner to you. Don't deny them that pleasure . . .

From the Male Room

'I love porn and I love my girlfriend . . . But I think it's a primal thing for guys to appreciate all types of female forms and that's the reason I enjoy porn. Really just the female form and performance . . . I feel like more sex after watching porn actually. I love sex with my girl but the defining difference between porn is that I appreciate her in more ways than just her body.'—**Aero**

'Girls, are you kidding? Hollywood McPorn is so unsexy and boring; the alternative of "real sex" with the missus/partner/GF is a no-brainer. Of course we'll have you. The question is, will you have us? Take a closer look at what constitutes mainstream porn these days—silicone breasts, ugly hair extensions, tandoori tans and skinny chicks: GROSS!'—**Miles**

'I seriously doubt that porn has much to do with a guy's view on a woman. My ex actually bought us a porn DVD and we had planned to watch it together as foreplay to what was already a pretty damn good sex life. Ultimately that didn't happen, but the idea was there and neither of us had any greater expectations other than it would provide a nice erotic segue into the bedroom. Porn is porn, just a visual aid, and as everyone knows, males are very visually orientated while women are more emotionally focused. If you care and love your

partner, sex should just be a natural by-product no matter what position you choose!'—**LoveAddict**

'Men cheat because they are bored and the woman they are with doesn't have a strong physical relationship with them.'—**AG**

'Why do women need more than one handbag? I don't mean that to sound facetious either. The answer to both questions is the same: both men and women are greedy, dissatisfied and seeking some kind of gratification and status through one-upmanship.'—**Emdash**

'A man cheats when he thinks that there aren't enough women on the planet who like him so he shouldn't waste an opportunity. Or for ego gratification, or because he has low self-esteem. Or he may believe women wouldn't accept it if he wanted to sleep around. He may also cheat if he doesn't truly know what he wants or if he has a pathological nature or bad moral compass.'—**Gary**

'Because we can have sex with one woman and still love another woman. We lack the emotional guilt.' —**Hitch**

'Men like shiny things—exhibit A: the eye candy. If you're low maintenance and you're in a relationship then chances are you're not shiny all the time. Give a guy a long enough spell with a non-shiny chick and

sooner or later the shiny one sauntering past will catch his eye. I've copped flak for this opinion before but because I'm a glutton for punishment I'll say it again. If you want your guy to notice you instead of the other girls, then be the eye candy.'—**Nick**

Why do men get moody?

We all know that the female species is notorious for mood swings. We get angry, frustrated, stressed, depressed and irritable without warning, reason or rationale. Most of the time our mood swings have no grounds whatsoever—unless it's the time of the month, when we're hopefully given licence by the kind gentle blokes in this world to be as temperamental, morose and as irritable as we like without censure or judgment. (Ha!) But when it comes to the gents and their dispositions, it's a whole different psychosexual story waiting to unfold. While men obviously don't suffer from PMS, nor do they have a regular mood-swing pattern that would enable us to predict when to pack up for a holiday with the girlfriends, (and wouldn't it be a hell of a lot easier if they did?), it seems blokes can be just as sporadically moody (and for no reason at all) as women.

Doctors and scientists reckon they've come up with a suitable explanation for why men get moody, claiming that it has more to do with internal hormones than with how much action they get on the golf course

or between the sheets. They've even come up with a name for it: Irritable Male Syndrome, or IMS.

Never heard of it? Neither had I. Psychotherapist Jed Diamond, author of *The Irritable Male Syndrome: Managing the 4 Key Causes of Male Depression and Aggression*, who has based his findings on forty years of research and a poll of more than 10,000 men, defines IMS as: 'A state of hypersensitivity, frustration, anxiety, and anger that occurs in males and is associated with biochemical changes, hormonal fluctuations, stress, and loss of male identity.'[25]

According to the IMS theory, a man's mood can swing from kind and loving to angry and aggressive at the drop of a hat thanks to a sudden drop in his levels of testosterone, which affects his brain and therefore his temper. Just like menopause for women, it strikes men later on in life.

Of course, while millions of men are affected by IMS, not all men suffer from it. Some blokes know that a sudden mood swing is based on the fact that they've missed the cricket on TV, played a bad golf game, haven't eaten all day or aren't getting enough sex. Others—like lawyer Tabitha's new boyfriend—can't quite pinpoint why they suddenly start snapping like any child; they just know something isn't right.

'I used to get upset when his mood swung so severely,' Tabitha said. 'But then I figured it out: he hasn't eaten all day! Now I simply carry around a bag of nuts and jelly beans with me and when he starts to lash out, I just feed him. All he needs is a bit of sugar

and some carbohydrates and he's back being his usual charming self. Works every time.'

#96. MAN TIP:

Just like with females, if blokes eat right and look after their bodies, their moods shouldn't swing too drastically, as long as they keep their stress levels low.

Why is it so important to keep our moods in check? Because we all know that misery breeds misery. When someone you're with frequently gets moody and aggressive or introverted and depressed, it's tough on you too. How are we to be happy if our partner is constantly putting us and themselves down? Perhaps those of us in that unbearable situation should heed Tabitha's advice: 'Either dump 'em or get yourself a bag of M&Ms to feed 'em with. And don't forget that sex can be the ultimate IMS remedy.'

#97. SEX SOLVES ALL:

If you are in a long-term relationship and notice your man is moody, or is constantly picking fights with you, don't deny him sex. In fact, be more open to it! Sex is important for men for so many different reasons . . . specifically stress relief. It's funny but after sex, all male worries seem to instantly dissipate. Mission accomplished . . . (in missionary!)

Epilogue

Six months later

It took weeks for Abigail to move out of the apartment she shared with Lloyd. Yet instead of moping around wondering why he wouldn't marry her, she decided to hell with him! She was going to make her dreams come true with or without a guy to slow her down. And that's exactly what she did.

Now, with the wind whipping through her hair, she wound her convertible rental through the narrow streets and away from the glittering lights of Silicon Valley towards her new apartment in San Francisco. A warm glow filled her body as she turned a sharp corner and thought of the massive coup she had just pulled off. She had done it! She, Abigail, had pulled off a mammoth deal in the heart of the tech-world. She'd finally got angel funding for her online dating website www.luv-topia.com and now it was certain her business would be catapulted into the next stratosphere. Take that Lloyd.

She pictured him angrily choking on his cornflakes when he read about her deal in the Wall Street Journal. *Yes, she was giving him what was due—a big kick up the proverbial balls. She had gone where every aspiring online entrepreneur only dreamed of going. And now she would make sure nothing would stop her, especially not an empty ring finger.*

For months leading up to the big pitch in Silicon Valley, she had put in eighteen-hour days, making sure every detail of the website was perfect. She knew it had all been worth it the

minute she stood up at the end of her meeting with Cameron Carter, head of Carter Investments, one of the largest angel investors in the Valley, and shook his hand. She had made it. And now she was finally able to live out her dreams.

Abigail even looked completely different too. She'd done away with her specs and messy bun and instead had opted for a pair of contact lenses, a soft wavy blow dry that hung loosely to her waist, and was dressed in one of those cleavage-enhancing wrap dresses by Diane Von Furstenburg.

#98. FEMININE WOMEN:

Men revel in a woman who looks, tastes, smells and acts like a woman. Men are innately built to be drawn to the feminine ying to their masculine yang. Don't attempt to flip the natural way of things outside of the boardroom. Put on a pair of heels, let your hair loose and flash a smile that is enhanced by a subtle slick of gloss . . .

Abigail flinched as she remembered the time when she was trying so hard: flashing her money around, proving to men how successful she was, proving to Lloyd that she could do a man's job. God, the answer had been so simple, *she thought. All she really had to do was to step back a little bit. Dress a little sexier. And boy, the men were responding. And chasing. Especially powerful men like Cameron Carter.*

Thinking back, she couldn't believe that she had been that sad girl who had begged her boyfriend to propose. 'What

a loser,' Abigail thought. 'Who was I?' She was over that stage of her life. It was time for the new Abigail to enter the world, with marriage being the furthest thing from her mind . . .

Lulu was still single. Yet for the first time in her life, she didn't feel the urgent desperation to chase a man for his attention. She'd successfully completed the ex detox, had quit her high-flying law career, moved to Paris to learn French and had swapped her gym routine for jogs around the romantic Luxembourg gardens. For once Lulu's life wasn't falling apart. And now, as she sat in a cab on her way to the famous Paris Ritz Hotel, she tossed a lock of her new caramel-highlighted hair away from her green eyes and smiled. She'd always wanted to go to the Ritz and since she didn't have a boyfriend, she decided that she'd go alone. It was the way she'd been doing everything in her life lately. She'd flown to Paris alone, found her own apartment, made new friends and learnt a new language. Yes, it feels pretty darn good, *she thought as she stepped out of the cab. Yet as she reached the doors of the hotel, the darn maître d' stopped her in her tracks.*

'Seul êtes vous?' *he asked, cocking one eyebrow in the direction of her empty arm.* Are you alone? *She felt herself about to snap.* What the fuck is it to you that I'm alone? *she thought.* Just because everyone in this sodden world is married or has a boyfriend, doesn't mean that I should have one too you stupid asshole! *But instead of flipping out, Lulu straightened out her dress, dropped her leather jacket*

to reveal her cleavage (perfectly enhanced by her new U-bra and artfully applied spray-tan), and pushed past him.

#99. SINGLEDOM DOESN'T SUCK:

A single gal's biggest obstacle is not her own loneliness but the sad judgments and snide comments made by those around her who think she should have a man by her side in order to be fulfilled. Ladies, get ready for a barrage of these sorts of sentiments being expressed by relatives, friends and strangers alike. But to hell with them! You're a single gal and you're proud of it. Plus you can smile knowing that you haven't settled for anything less than you deserve.

'Excusez-moi,' *Lulu smiled politely as she strutted past the maître d'. She didn't need to be berated like that. Instead of feeling lonely, Lulu felt satisfied sitting in the corner of the bar sipping on her black rose cocktail. She knew that she was definitely not the only single woman left in the world. She also knew that when she was ready to meet The One, he would waltz into her life. But right now she was having way too much fun to worry about such things, especially thanks to the plethora of ripe French men available for the picking. Just the thought was enough to give her tingles up and down her spine. Life for Lulu had just begun . . .*

Soon after Jane's fairytale wedding Poppy gave birth to a beautiful healthy baby girl weighing in at 5lbs 4oz. She named her Daffodil. Determined to put the entire Doug ordeal behind her, Poppy managed to keep his name right out of the media despite the prying eyes of the paparazzi. Yet instead of hiding away from the media, she channelled the interest in her private life into promoting her new venture: a baby fashion line called Daffy. Suddenly all the top magazines wanted to photograph her again, hailing her the hottest model mother to rival even Angelina Jolie. There was Vogue, Harpers *and even* W Magazine, *and she was featured on the cover of every one of them.*

Pretty soon Poppy Belle was the belle of the ball once again and didn't have a man to thank for it. Now she was determined more than ever to make sure that her baby girl would be given everything she never had. A secure future. And enough money to never have to rely on a man for anything . . .

Courtney Luu moved in with Doug but two weeks later she found used condoms in his rubbish bin. They'd been having sex without. Courtney left him the next day. Doug is currently still single, much to his mother's delight.

Lloyd attempted to propose to Abigail three times after she left. He even flew to San Francisco in an attempt to make amends. But Abigail was too busy enjoying a date with Cameron Carter to even bother picking up Lloyd's call. Lloyd is still jobless and plays Nintendo in his spare time.

#100. DON'T PUT UP WITH CHEATING:

The minute you suspect something is amiss, get out as fast as your high heels can carry you. Once a cheater, always a cheater.

Jane and Duncan have settled nicely into domestic Los Angeles bliss. Jane is currently hosting her own entertainment news television show and she and Duncan will soon start trying for a baby. The Producer attempted to contact Jane to offer her an exclusive interview with the actors from his latest movie. Jane told her second assistant to politely decline. The film turned out to be a flop anyway.

The last word

According to Malcolm Gladwell, author of *Outliers*, in order to become an expert at something, you need to clock up 10,000 hours of practice. While I haven't exactly spent 10,000 hours bonking (the average person spends roughly 4380 hours of his or her life having sex), by my reckoning, I've probably clocked up way over 10,000 hours of research into the topic.

About a year ago, when I started writing this book and started interviewing men, I had a moment of epiphany: everything we're searching for is probably right under our noses, if we look hard enough. If we stop opting for the quick fix, the candy sex, the spine-tingling nights out and the attention that feeds only our egos, not our hearts. There is more to life than dating bad boys, men who fuck and flee, who use us and abuse us and manage to make us feel like the lowest scum on earth for allowing ourselves to trust them in the first place.

The second thing I realised is that we can't rely on our partner to provide every missing element in our lives, just as we can't do the same for him. All that 'you complete me' bullshit spawned by the film *Jerry McGuire* is just that: bullshit. Couples don't complete one another; we're merely companions and partners. A team.

The final message is that women need to know their worth. We need to stop chasing men and start realising that we need to be the ones to be chased. And if a man isn't chasing us—whether we're single, dating him or ensconced in a long-term relationship with him—he just simply isn't worth it. No phone call, no text, no email, no follow-up date, no birthday present, refusing to meet your parents or not treating you the way you should be treated simply means one thing—NEXT. You deserve to date someone who actually WANTS to be with you, as opposed to someone you're falsely infatuated with just because The Chase is giving you a surge of false hormones that make you feel more in love with them than you really are . . .

#101. KNOW YOUR WORTH:

Making him chase you isn't about playing games and not being yourself. It's about giving him the time, space and drive to want to pursue you. And if he's The One he'll do anything to get you, regardless of what it takes . . . GOOD LUCK!

The Modern Man Survey results

Over the last year 2000 men took my 'Modern Man Survey'. Finally, here are the results. I hope you're not too surprised . . .

Single men

- 46 per cent of men believe they are still single because they haven't met the right person yet; 36 per cent said the reason was due to being burned by an ex-girlfriend and only 3 per cent admitted to being afraid of commitment.
- 74 per cent of men see themselves as the 'nice guy'.

Dating and sex

- 73 per cent of men would date someone outside of their religion and 66 per cent would marry someone outside their religion.
- 34 per cent of men say a woman should sleep with them on the third date, 30 per cent hope to get lucky on the first date and 5 per cent say they should wait three to six months.
- If a woman does sleep with them on the first date, 30 per cent would not consider her more than a one-night stand.

- The majority of men surveyed think it's acceptable for women to have slept with 1–5 men. The majority of men surveyed say they've slept with 1–5 women too.
- 'Ex-boyfriend issues' are considered baggage by 90 per cent of men, while kids come in second place at 68 per cent and a failed marriage at 50 per cent.

Women and turn-offs

- Nagging is the number one turn-off for men at a whopping 85 per cent.
- Speaking on her mobile phone during a date comes in at second place with 68 per cent of the votes, followed by lack of self-confidence at 64 per cent.
- The top turn-on is a miniskirt at 50 per cent, followed by cleavage (25 per cent) and long hair (8.9 per cent).
- Women should never mention an ex on a date (84 per cent), the word marriage (72 per cent) or the fact that she wants kids (64 per cent).
- 39 per cent of men think women should offer to pay on the date but he should foot the bill.
- 70 per cent of men admitted that they didn't call after a date because they just weren't that into her.
- 22 per cent of men date more than 6 women at a time because they 'like to keep my options open'.
- The majority of men say that after they sleep with someone, they would like to become exclusive (42 per cent).

Living together

- 89 per cent of men want to live together with their partner before getting hitched.

Cheating

- More than half of the men surveyed (55 per cent) have cheated on their partner whereas 70 per cent have been cheated on.
- More than 71 per cent of these cheaters say they cheated because the opportunity presented itself, rather than being dissatisfied with their current relationship or falling in love with someone else.
- 74 per cent of men think that kissing is cheating, 47 per cent say flirting on the internet is cheating and 91 per cent say oral sex counts as infidelity.

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Most importantly, thank you to Mr Leopold—Joshy—the bloke who has stood by me throughout all this stuff. I don't know how he did it, but one day he'll be writing his memoirs of what it's like to date the 'dating expert' . . . and we'll all need to run for cover.

Endnotes

1. These folks have taken one of the first looks ever into the biological basis for human attachment and bonding. Learn more at www.oxytocin.org/oxytoc/.
2. Married men have less testosterone than bachelors, according to anthropologist Peter Gray and a team from Harvard University. Hence married men are less likely to stray than your hot single bachelor!
3. Dr Nick Neave is an evolutionary psychologist from Northumbria University and told the *Daily Mail* newspaper that women need men regardless of what they say.
4. 'Sorry but women are dependent on men', by Dr Nick Neave, www.dailymail.co.uk.
5. 'Hollywood's stand-in dads', by Kristen Kemp, *Daily News*.
6. 'Marry him!', by Lori Gottlieb, *The Atlantic*, www.theatlantic.com/doc/200803/single-marry.
7. 'Beware L'Homme Fatale!', by Irina Aleksander, *The Observer*, www.observer.com/2008/o2/beware-l-homme-fatale.
8. 'Field guide to guys: L'Homme Fatale', by Sadie, *Jezebel*, jezebel.com/5112428/field-guide-to-guys-lhomme-fatal.
9. 'Dating Detox: I took a 3-year break from men',

by Kristin Booker, *Your Tango*, www.yourtango.com/200910324/dating-detox-do-you-need-rehab.

10. One in five people carry an STD, see www.kids-growth.com.
11. Read more of 'Love Signals' by David Givens from www.amazon.com/Love-Signals-David-Givens/dp/0517550377.
12. Find out more at www.sirc.org.
13. See www.tatler.co.uk.
14. *The Rules* is a famous book written in the nineties giving women old-fashioned dating advice. See www.therulesbook.com.
15. You should never have to endure an abusive relationship. If this is you, please contact a place like Lifeline at www.lifeline.org.au.
16. 'Why Men Won't Commit: Exploring young men's attitudes about sex, dating and marriage', study by Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe, Rutgers University, New Jersey.
17. A Columbia University study says living with someone before getting hitched decreases your chance at a long-lasting marriage. Oh, and there's less sex too—so don't do it.
18. Go to www.drlaura.com to find out more.
19. 'Female Orgasm May Be Tied to "Rule of Thumb"', by Susan Donaldson James, ABC News, www.abcnews.go.com/Health/ReproductiveHealth/sex-study-female-orgasm-eludes-majority-women/story?id=8485289.

20. Candida Royalle is a former adult star who has gone on to launch Femme Distribution—female friendly porn. See www.candidaroyalle.com/.
21. You can buy the book at www.amazon.com/Spot-Other-Discoveries-About-Sexuality/dp/0440130409.
22. 'Men lose their minds when speaking to pretty women', by Pat Hagan, www.telegraph.co.uk.
23. This is according to the Seduction Labs website: www.seductionlabs.org/2007/07/24/why-men-are-more-visual/.
24. According to the *Chicago Tribune*.
25. See www.menalive.com.